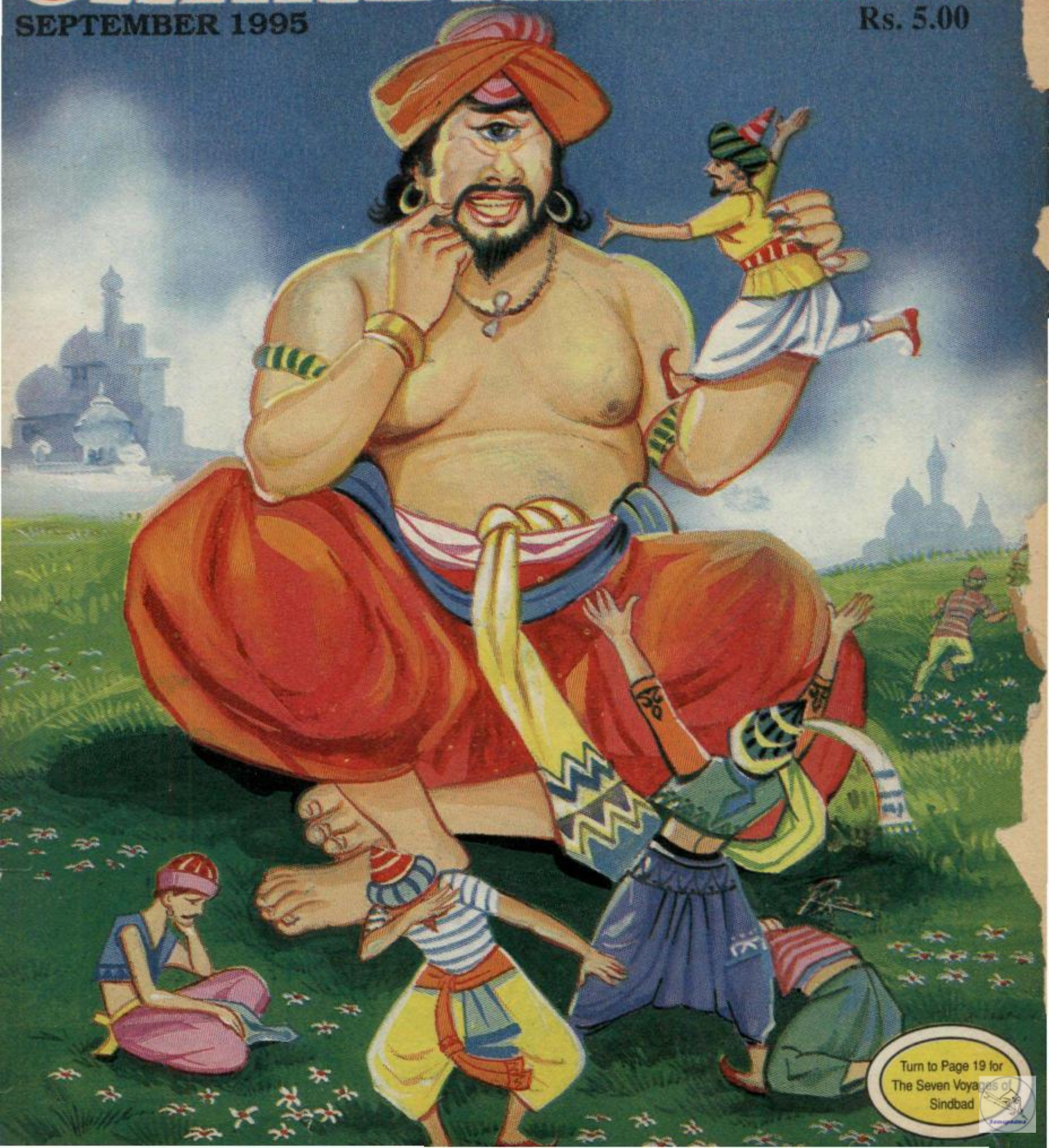


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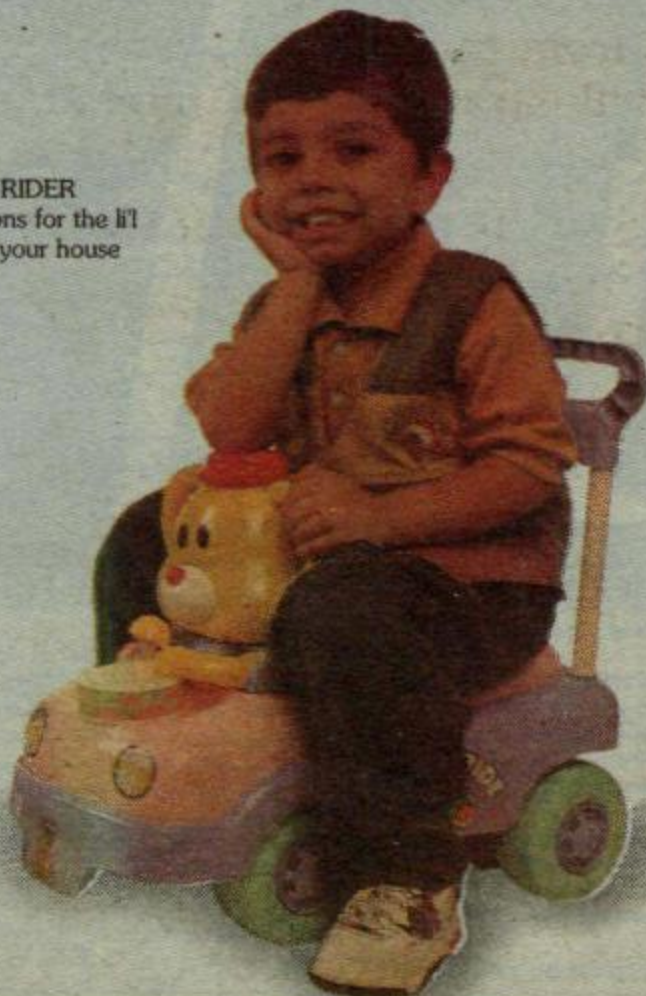


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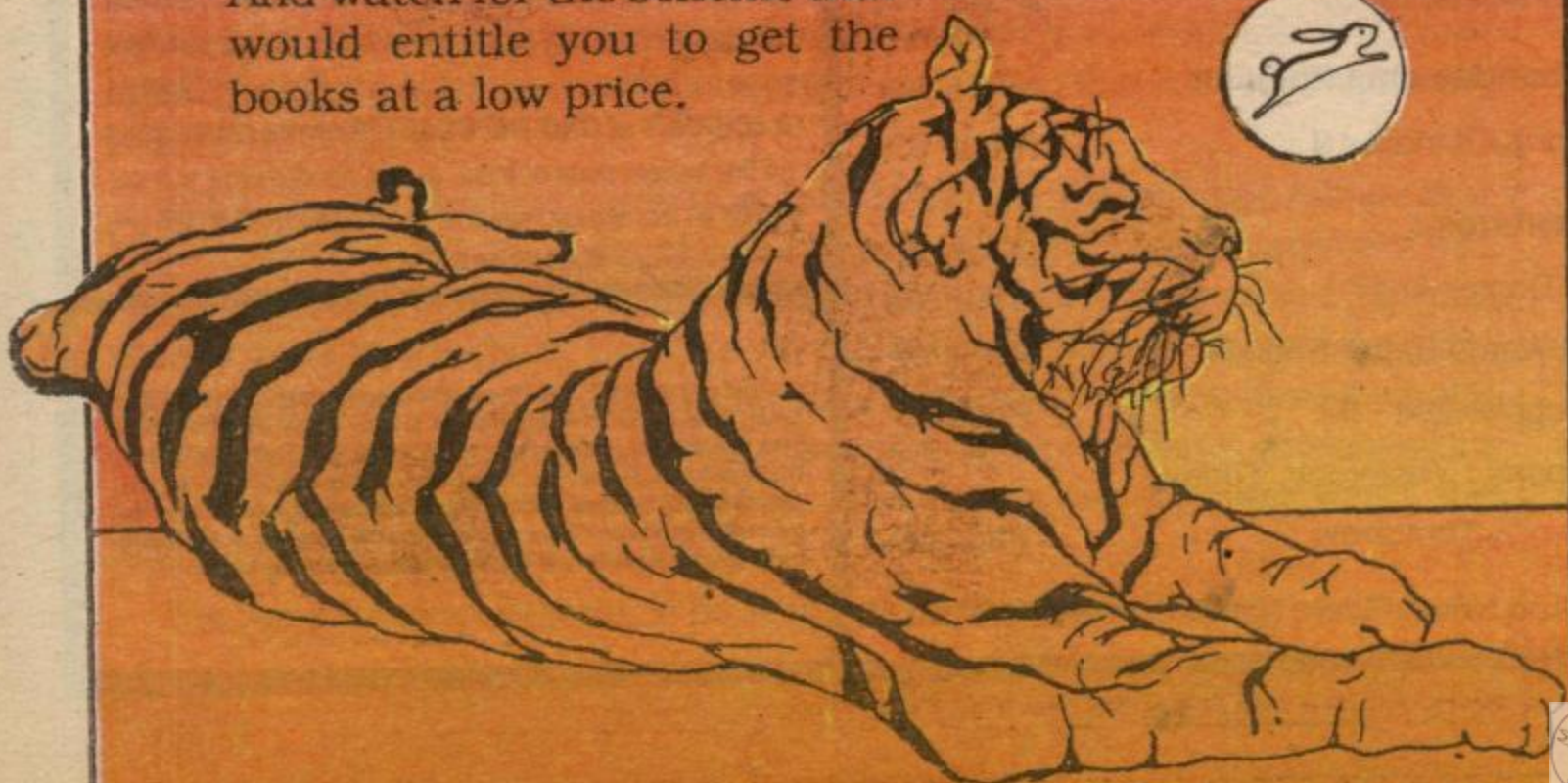


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CHANDAMAMA

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And News Flash, Let Us Know and more.

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SEVEN VOYAGES OF SINDBAD : When Sindbad hears that some wealthy merchants have hired a brand new ship to carry their merchandise, he is not able to resist the temptation of yet another voyage. Unfortunately, the ship breaks into pieces in a storm and the passengers swim to safety. The island they go into is full of cannibals. After a dance, they arrange a feast and the merchants are given a potion to drink. Sindbad spits it out, while his companions enjoy it. Soon they begin walking on all fours and bleating like cattle. Sindbad poses like one of them and manages to escape to another island where he takes the princess as his wife. She dies and he is told that the custom of the land demands his burial along with his dead wife! How does he escape?

AGE IS NO BAR : Gurumurthi endears himself by doing all odd jobs entrusted to him. When he gets old, people prefer a young man. Gurumurthi is sad. 'I'm perfectly healthy, and I still can do any work,' he proclaims. He gets an opportunity to prove his claim.

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Founder
CHAKRAPANI



Controlling Editor :
NAGI REDDI

Landmark decisions

Two decisions taken by State governments – one in capital Delhi and the other in Kerala – are very much concerning children and, therefore, worth discussing.

According to a government order issued by the Delhi Municipal Corporation, no heavy vehicles can ply along roads where there are more than one school located – at least during school hours.

The country's capital comprises the twin cities of Delhi and New Delhi, where the civic administration rests with the Delhi Municipal Corporation and the New Delhi Municipal Committee respectively. Old Delhi is comparatively a congested area and is dotted with schools, unlike New Delhi where schools are not that close to each other and the roads are broader. Residents of some of the colonies of Delhi went to court, impleading the Municipal authorities, and the Delhi High Court came out with a directive to the Corporation to prohibit heavy vehicular traffic in school zones to prevent pollution and accidents. The court made great stress on environmental pollution, stating that it is causing health hazards to children.

In Kerala, the decision came from the Government itself, prohibiting cigarette smoking in the precincts of schools and colleges. The Government has cautioned that stringent punishment would be awarded to those who break this newest code of discipline. Some grown-up students may try to smoke on the sly. But the Government order applies more to the teachers who have the habit of smoking and who do smoke, if not in the presence of students, at least when they are closeted in their staff rooms. The Kerala Government wants the teachers to set a model to students.

The two directives deserve to be emulated by the other State governments.

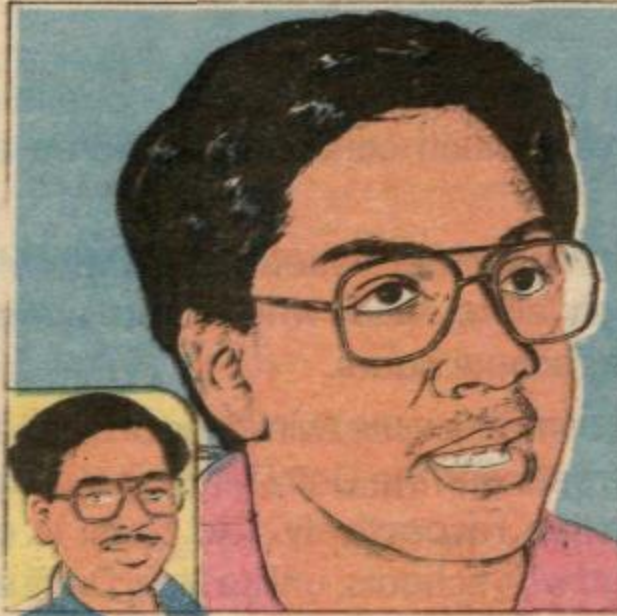
Imagine this scene. Date : June 30. Place : Chicago. Occasion : Convention of Indian doctors in the U.S.A. President Bill Clinton is speaking. He mentions the name of Dr. Ambati. A 17-year-old boy rises in his seat so that everybody in the packed hall can have a good view of him. The President raises his hand in salute, and says : "I must say I was certainly humbled when Dr. Ambati was introduced as the youngest doctor in the world." Cheers go up.

He waits for the clapping to cease and then adds : "It was just whispered in my ear that his brother became a doctor at the *ripe old age* of 19!" The hall echoes with laughter.

Notwithstanding the American President's words of tribute, Balamurali Krishna Ambati's is no mean achievement. How else could it have been when, at the age of four, he was solving mathematics puzzles? When he was six he was put in First Grade and in a matter of weeks (*not* a full year), he was promoted to the next Grade? When in the next three years, he got five more promotions? In 1991, when he was 13, he took his B.A. in Biology—the youngest graduate in the history of

A WINDOW ON THE WORLD

A Doctor at 17



New York University? The next four years saw him completing his degree in Medicine from the Mount Sinai Medical School.

The other three Ambatis in his life—father Mohan Rao (doctorate in industrial engineering), mother Gomathi (doctor of education), and brother Jayakrishna (doctor of ophthalmology)—stood by him "once he (Balamurali) decided to go for it (degree)" at a very young age. The record till then was held by an Israeli, who took his degree in Medicine

from the University of Perugia, Italy, when he was only 18.

Balamurali and Jayakrishna, who is seven years older, co-authored a popular book on AIDS, six years ago. While its second edition is just coming out, their second book venture—something on global environment—is already with a publisher.

"Your family and your friends, and indeed all of us, should be very proud." That was how President Bill Clinton summed up his praise of the India-born Ambati brothers.

Incidentally, Clinton himself became a college professor when he was 26, a state Governor at 31, and the youngest President of the U.S.A. at 43.





Laughter can be a cure

Appadurai was not a rich man, but he was braggart. Once he began talking, he would go on and on. If his relations were to come to his help, he would pose like a *raja*. And he would speak as if he knew everything and he was cleverer than everybody else. Strangely he was popular among the local people.

His brother-in-law tried to reform him by advice. But there was no change in Appadurai and he carried on his bragging. One day, he slipped and fell down near the well. He suffered a twist on the leg. His wife saw him fall and she began to laugh. She could not control her laughter.

Naturally, he was irritated. "Women normally worship their husbands as gods, but look at that! You're laughing and mocking at me! You were watching me slip and fall down, didn't you? Couldn't you have rushed to my aid and prevented me

from falling? Is this the way you treat your husband?" he pulled her up.

Brother-in-law Annadurai, who came there at that very moment, rebuked him. "Who wouldn't laugh at the way you walk? When I see you swaying this way and that and limping, I myself can't control my laughter."

"So, you too were watching my fall, weren't you?" Appadurai was cross with him. "At least you could have rushed to my help, instead of standing there like a statue!" He continued to hurl abuses at him, but Annadurai did not react. He soon went away from there.

Appadurai limped his way to the front door and remained there watching the people on the street. A beggar came that way.

"Sir, take pity on me, I'm a lame," he pleaded with Appadurai. "I can't



do any work and I'm not able to roam in search of work. Please help me with some money."

"I too can't walk without limping," said Appadurai pathetically. "But I'm not going about begging from people. Go! Go away!"

The beggar would not easily give up. "Sir, you've everything, and don't have to go a-begging. But look at me! I'm not fortunate like you. If you were to go and seek alms from four or five houses, you will realise how much people like me have to suffer."

"What did you say, you rascal?" Appadurai was furious. "You're

asking me to go round begging?" He raised his hand to hit the beggar, and limped towards him.

This was being watched by some children in the street playing marbles. Now, even under normal circumstances Appadurai detested children. Sometimes he would grab their marbles and go away and would not return them for several days. He would always quarrel with them. So, the children also did not take a liking for him.

When they saw him limping, the children were amused. They began mocking at him. "If one were to go blind, this is how he'll walk," said one of them. He then closed his eyes with one hand and tried to walk. Another one said, "This is how a deaf person walks," and he posed as if he was deaf by plugging his ears with his fingers. Another child imitated a dumb. "Baa! Baa!"

A fourth child came forward. "None of you will be able to say who you've imitated. But I can name the person I shall imitate now." He then walked with a limp and then turned and pointed his fingers. "Appadurai!" The other children cheered him.

Appadurai scolded them and limped out to beat them. They ran

helter-skelter. Just then a stranger came there. Appadurai had not seen him earlier. "I work for Manickam in his farm. I've come to meet Appadurai."

"I'm Appadurai. Why do you want to meet me? Come on, quick!" He thought the man had come there to make fun of him.

"How am I certain that you are Appadurai?" the stranger said. "I heard the children say you are a lame. But you look perfectly all right. Please walk, so that I can assure myself that *you* are Appadurai and none else."

"Oh! You want me to show you how I walk, don't you?" said

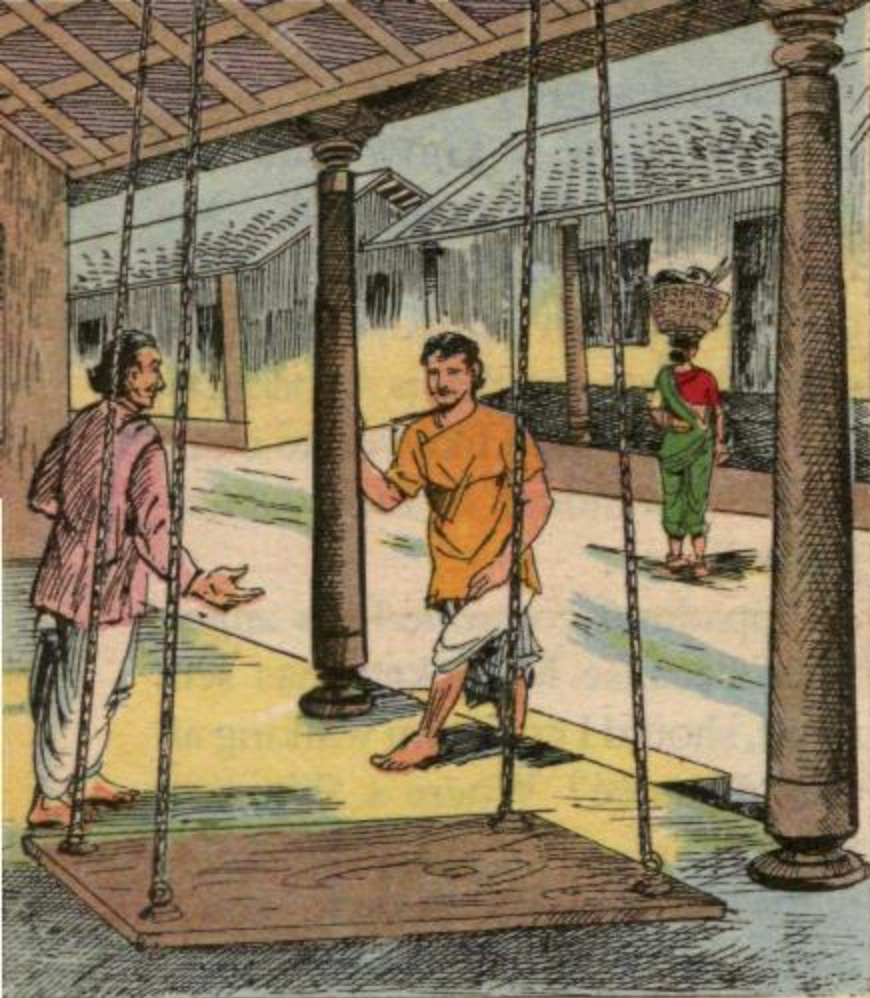
Appadurai angrily.

"Yes, now I know you are Appadurai," the man said. "My master had warned me that there is only one person in this village with a bad temper, and that is Appadurai. My master would like you to come to his new house in the coconut-grove."

Appadurai controlled his anger. "Just because Manickam has sent word, should I go to him walking all that distance? Where's this new house?"

"When you go straight, you'll come to a street, where 'Dog' Appadurai lives. After that comes the house of 'Buffalo' Appadurai. A





little way ahead is 'Lame bullock' Appadurai's house. Opposite is where my master lives, in the coconut-grove."

Appadurai did not appreciate the way the man spoke, giving epithets to people in the village. He spoke harshly to Manickam's servant, who apologetically said: "That's how my master describes them. This is how they are generally called."

Appadurai had some respect for Manickam. So, he started for his new house in the coconut-grove. Manickam was waiting for him at the door-step. "Come in! Come in!" he greeted Appadurai. "I was ea-

gerly awaiting your arrival. My cousin Sivakami has suddenly stopped speaking. She doesn't even laugh or smile. She looks as if she has lost something. If only she could be made to laugh and speak, she would become normal once again. In fact, the doctor says she'll get cured if she can be made to laugh just once. And many of us did make an attempt, but without avail. We've given up. That's why we decided to call you."

"How can I be of any help?" Appadurai expressed his doubt. "I'm not a doctor who can treat a patient. If only I had known this earlier, I would have brought along a doctor. What exactly do you want me to do?" he asked impatiently.

"You'll be able to help, Appadurai, in fact, you alone will be able to cure the girl," said Manickam. "People say it's an amusing sight the way you walk. Could you walk in front of Sivakami? Who knows, that may make her laugh!" he pleaded.

Appadurai was infuriated. He did not mince words while abusing Manickam. He saw Sivakami watching him intently. "Ah! You want to make fun of the way I walk? Why did you come here? You want to laugh? Get out! Go away!" He





hurled abuses at her also, before he walked out of the place.

Sivakami enjoyed the way he was provoked. More than that, she was amused when she saw him walk with a limp. Suddenly, she let out a big laughter, loud enough to make Appadurai turn around and look at her. He stood still, watching her laugh and giggle. He retraced his steps to listen to Manickam and everybody else praising him sky-high, because they felt that Sivakami had been cured of her illness and she was a normal girl once again.

“Why should you make fun of me

if I walk with a limp?” Appadurai asked Manickam. “Didn’t it cure your cousin?”

“Anybody would laugh at the way you speak in anger and the manner of your walk,” said Manickam. “And Sivakami is no exception.”

Appadurai felt ashamed of himself. He stood there, face hanging down in shame. From then on, he never spoke angrily to others, never rebuked them, nor made fun of them. He was calm whenever he talked to anybody. And everybody soon forgot that he was a lame and showed regard and respect for him.

Nine tailors cannot make a man

Too much wisdom is folly

A penny saved is a penny gained





Failure and ruin are not far from him who says it is sweet to excel in hatred.

- Thirukkural



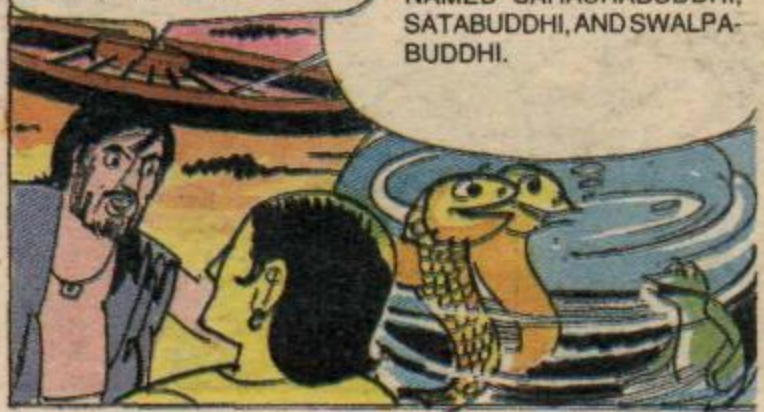
COMMONSENSE CAN'T HELP YOU IF FATE WILL OTHERWISE. I SHALL TELL YOU A STORY WHICH ILLUSTRATES THIS TRUTH.

PLEASE TELL ME THAT STORY.



ONCE THREE FRIENDS LIVED IN A LAKE -

-TWO FISHES AND A FROG NAMED SAHASRABUDDHI, SATABUDDHI, AND SWALPA-BUDDHI.



ONEDAY, SOMEONE COMES THAT WAY... I WONDER WHO THEY ARE! HUSH! DON'T MAKE ANY NOISE.



THERE'RE PLENTY OF FISH HERE. WE'LL COME TOMORROW AND CATCH THEM.



GOD HELP US! YOU HEARD THEM? LET'S LEAVE THIS PLACE BEFORE THEY COME.



HAI AH! MY FRIEND, DON'T BE AFRAID. HOW'RE YOU SURE THEY'LL COME AGAIN?



EVEN IF THE FISHERMEN COME, WE TWO WILL USE OUR WITS AND SAVE OURSELVES AND YOU.



THIS IS OUR BIRTH-PLACE, OUR HOME. WE SHOULDN'T LEAVE THIS ON MERE SUSPICION.



I'M NOT WISE AND INTELLIGENT LIKE YOU. I CAN'T REASON WITH YOU BOTH.



Labour will produce wealth, idleness will bring poverty.



SO, LISTEN TO US AND
LET'S STAY HERE.



NO, I FEEL I MUST LEAVE
THIS PLACE AT ONCE.
FAREWELL, MY FRIENDS!

ALL RIGHT, MY FRIEND!
YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE
OUR WISE ADVICE.



NEXT MORNING, THE FISH-
ERMEN COME TO THE LAKE—



—AND CATCH ALL THE FISH IN
THE LAKE, INCLUDING
SAHASRABUDDHI AND
SATABUDDHI.



ALAS! MY WISE FRIENDS
COULDN'T SAVE THEM-
SELVES.



THE WHEELBEARER FIN-
ISHES THE NARRATION.



SO EVEN INTELLIGENCE
MUST ULTIMATELY YIELD
TO FATE.

TRUE, TRUE! BUT ONE
SHOULD ALSO HEED HIS
FRIEND'S ADVICE.



YOUR GREED AND ARRO-
GANCE CLOUDED YOUR
BRAIN.



I'M NOW REMINDED OF
THE STORY OF MANDA.



PLEASE TELL ME ABOUT
MANDA!



Truly great is the excellence of those who are free from
pride, anger, and lust.



ONCE MANDA THE
WEAVER WENT TO A FOR-
EST NEAR HIS VILLAGE

... IN SEARCH OF WOOD
FOR MAKING PEGS FOR
HIS LOOM.



THIS TREE LOOKS FINE.
I'LL GET PLENTY OF
WOOD FROM IT.



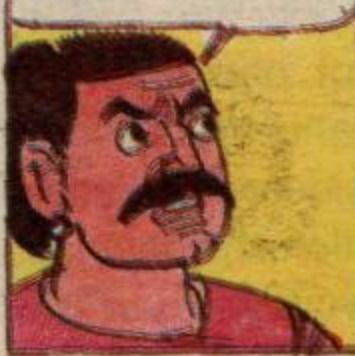
WHEN HE LIFTS HIS AXE
TO CUT IT DOWN, HE
HEARS A VOICE.



PLEASE STOP! DON'T CUT THE
TREE. IT IS MY HOME.



I NEED WOOD FOR MY
LOOMS. SO I'VE TO CUT IT.
WHO'RE YOU?



I'M A FAIRY. IF YOU DON'T
CUT THIS TREE, I SHALL
GRANT YOU ANY BOON
YOU ASK OF ME.



OH! IS IT SO? THEN, LET ME
GO AND CONSULT MY
FRIEND AND MY WIFE.



THE WEAVER GOES TO
HIS TRUSTED FRIEND
AND TELLS HIM WHAT
THE FAIRY HAD SAID.

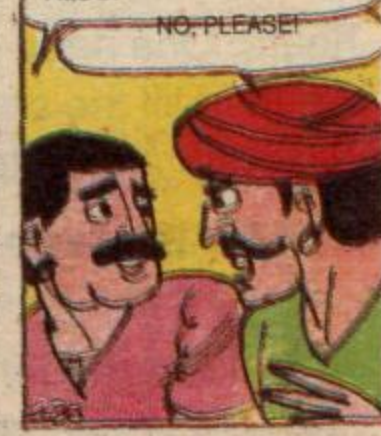


GO AND ASK FOR A KING-
DOM: I SHALL BE YOUR CHIEF
MINISTER.

WHY DO YOU HESITATE?
GO!



LET ME CONSULT MY WIFE
ALSO.



NO, PLEASE!

All despise the poor, but all praise the rich.

The peg can be square or round

Is the idiom 'round peg in a square hole' or 'square peg in a round hole'? Which is the correct expression?

- *Jyotiranjana Biswal, Durgapur*

Both are correct. The idiom means, one who is unsuited to the particular position he occupies.

Recently I read that the Central Zoo Authority has directed the Jaipur Zoo officials to curb the population of reptiles in the State. I think the word *population* can be used only for human beings. Am I right?

- *P. Parameshwar, Kusum Kuhare, Orissa*

"Chambers" gives the meaning of population as: the number of inhabitants of a particular class; the plants and animals in a given area; a group of persons, objects, items considered statistically. Thus, we have the population of India, the tiger population, the population of coconut trees (in a particular area), etc, where the word as used is correct.

What does the expression "small hours of the morning" signify?

- *Lakshmipathi Venkataraman, Ponneri*

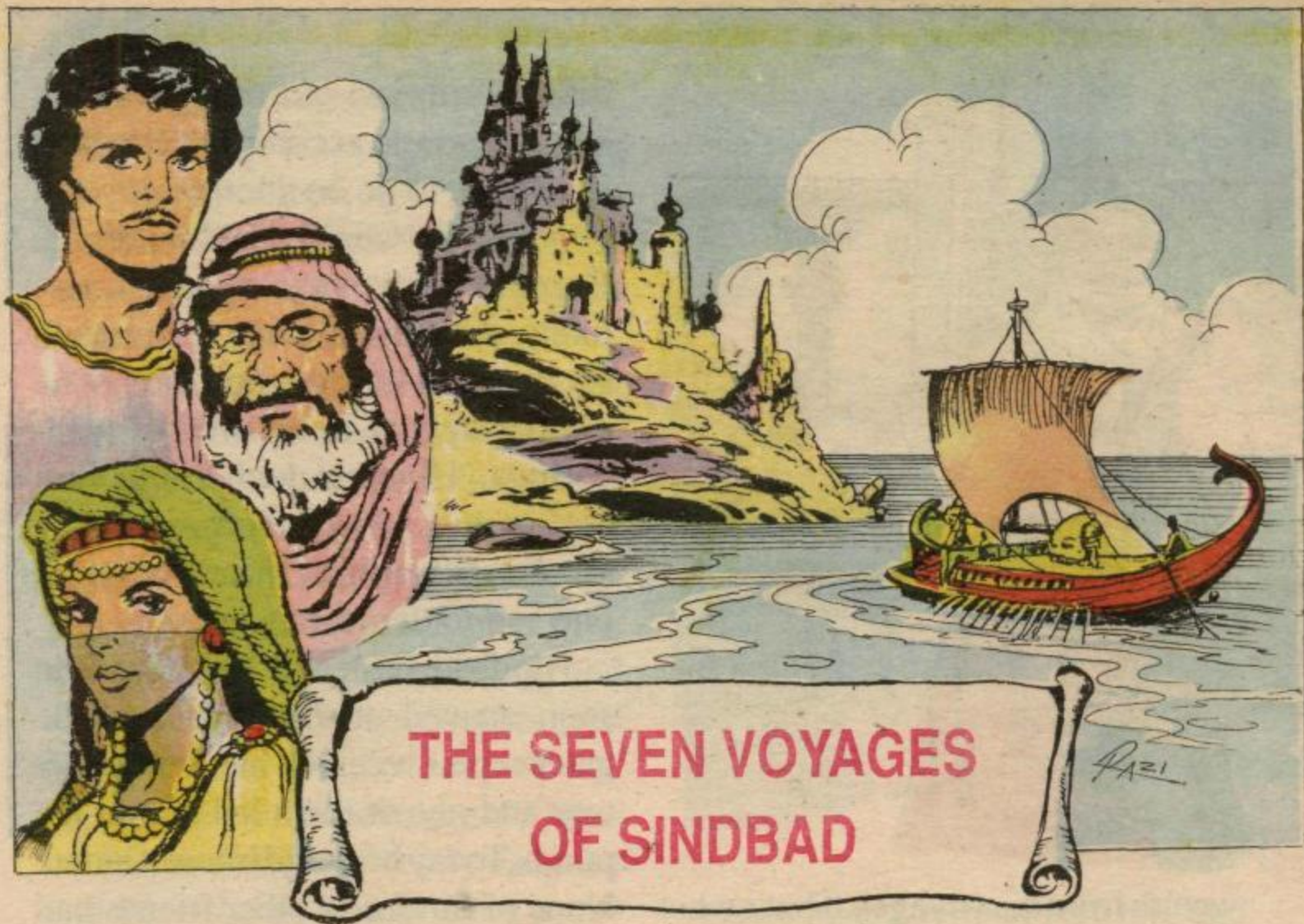
The first few hours immediately after midnight are called the small hours. One need not specify "of the morning". When you say: "The party went on till the small hours", it would mean that people have stayed till 2 a.m. or 3 a.m. after which it is time for dawn.

Who is a 'sob-sister'?

- *Priti Ganguli, 24 Paraganas*

It is a slang for a woman (rarely for man) who writes such articles in newspapers and magazines that will draw tears in the reader. It will also mean a person who provides answers to questions sent by readers of women's magazines. While a 'sob-story' is a pitiful tale that arouses sympathy, 'sob-stuff' means cheap and extravagant pathos to stir tears.





When Hindbad the porter reached his house after spending a day at the mansion of Sindbad, listening to the sailor's narration of his exciting second voyage, he found his wife Zubeida and children eagerly waiting for him. For, they expected him to bring something valuable, like he did the previous day – a velvet bag full of glittering gold coins.

Today they did not see any bag with him. Instead, he pulled out a diamond from his pocket. As he held

it in his palm, their eyes were blinded. It was dazzling.

Hindbad handed the diamond to his wife. "Keep it safe," he told her. "When I get more money, I shall have it set on a pendant for you."

"Who's this new friend of yours, my lord?" Zubeida could not check her curiosity. "Will he give you something more? Have you to go back to him again? Today?"

"We call him the sailor – Sindbad the sailor," replied Hindbad. "He's very rich! He has acquired all his



wealth from his voyages. That's what he is trying to tell us every day. Sure, he passed through difficult days before he became rich. Yes, I must go again today to listen to him narrate his adventures. There's a lot to learn from his experiences. But we shouldn't expect a gift from him every time."

Zubeida had spent the money he gave her the previous day carefully, and had cooked for him a little feast. After he had eaten and played with his children for a while, Hindbad got ready. He put on fresh clothes; no longer did he look like an ordinary porter. As he wended his way to

Sindbad's mansion, a thought struck him. He would accompany Sindbad if he were to go on another voyage, provided he would take him along. But another voyage appeared unlikely, as he had already undertaken six or seven voyages and though he did not appear to be tired of wanderings, Hindbad had found him ageing and always surrounded by servants to help him. In long voyages, one had to depend on oneself.

Hindbad hastened his steps and soon arrived at the mansion. The gatekeepers received him with courtesy and one of them led him to the porch. Today he found himself alone. None of Sindbad's other friends had turned up till then. Soon he came from inside with outstretched hands. "Ah my friend! You've come!" He caught hold of Hindbad's hands and made him sit by his side. "I was afraid there won't be anybody to listen to my story. Let's hope the others will turn up soon."

Two slave girls had by then served them drinks in long glasses. While they waited for others to join them, Hindbad wondered whether Sindbad would at least today not enquire about his family or how he eked out a livelihood. No, Sindbad did not utter a single word about them.



However, he made sure that Hindbad felt at home in his company. He was not disappointed, for, thanks to Sindbad, he and his family would not know any want for some days at least.

Before long, the friends trooped in one after the other. Drinks were brought for them, too. Sometime later dinner was announced and they all moved inside and took their seats. Dinner was a long drawn-out affair, and as they sat there eating and drinking, Sindbad recounted his third voyage.

"Would you believe me if I were to tell you that I was nearly eaten by a giant and that he had three eyes? Two of them wouldn't open and the third one above the other two would never close and so one wouldn't know whether he was awake or asleep!" said Sindbad. "No? Then listen."



On his return from his second voyage, young Sindbad told his mother that he would not go again, to be stranded on islands, or picked up by huge birds and dropped on god-forsaken places. After all, the diamonds he had collected from the Valley of Diamonds would see them through for days together.



Sindbad led a life of pleasure and mostly remained at home entertaining friends and guests. One day, he had an unexpected visitor – the captain of the ship which had gone away without taking him on board. He had just then returned from a long voyage and had sought him out to tell him that the merchandise Sindbad had taken on board – or whatever was left after sale at the ports they had touched – was safe, and he could either take the bales and packets off the ship or join it on its next voyage.

The captain was apologetic about what happened on the island where





they had all alighted to pick fruits and collect fresh water. When he and the other traders got on to the boat which they had taken to the island, they somehow or other did not notice that Sindbad was not on board. They realised their folly only after the ship had gone some distance. They turned the ship back to the island and three of the traders did go up only to come back saying the boy could not be found at the place where they had seen him resting.

Sindbad told the captain that he would think about another voyage within a day, and sent him away

after thanking him for taking the trouble of searching him out. Sindbad thought, there was no use bringing back the merchandise from the ship. The items had been bought in Baghdad and neighbouring places. So, he decided to try his luck once again, and went about collecting choice merchandise comprising rare things which were in great demand in other countries. When he was ready, he met the owner of the ship and paid him his dues. He also met the captain and told him of his decision to undertake another voyage. The man was very happy to see the youngster's enthusiasm.

The ship sailed in the next three days. Again on board, Sindbad met some new enterprising traders and made their acquaintance. The ship took a new route and called on certain ports where they had not gone earlier. Everywhere Sindbad and the other traders did brisk business and made huge profit.

When they all thought that everything was going smooth, the ship was caught in a terrible storm, and for a whole day it was tossed about this way and that by high-rising waves. The captain cleverly manoeuvred the ship to take it to the nearest island. He dropped anchor



and advised everybody to swim to the shore as it would not be advisable to put out the small boat to take them to the island.

No sooner had they landed on the shore than a group of red-haired monkeys with bright yellow eyes surrounded the intruders. Their shrieks were ear-splitting. Luckily they did not harm the men. Before they could recover from the shock of the fearsome welcome they were accorded on the island, they were in for greater shock. The monkeys were seen swimming to the ship which, it was very clear, had aroused their curiosity. The waves did not bother them and soon they were all over the ship. The several ropes and cables tied to hooks and nails attracted their attention first and they cut all of them with their sharp teeth. Horror of horrors! The ship began moving. Presumably, the cable attached to the anchor had also been cut! The ship drifted without any direction. By that time the storm had subsided; otherwise the ship would have either run aground or sunk. The hairy primates, in their frenzy, did not notice that the ship had reached mid-sea. A few of them jumped into the sea but they could not reach the shore. The rest of the monkeys were

bewildered and stuck to their place on the ship. Nobody saw the ship, nor its four-legged passengers, again.

Meanwhile, Sindbad and his companions continued their search for human habitation on the island and possible help to build a boat. They wandered deep into the island which did not have much vegetation, no tall trees they could climb on to survey the place. They walked and walked – this time all together, taking care to see that none of them strayed away. They made young Sindbad walk in front along with the captain.

Suddenly, a huge building loomed large on the horizon. It definitely looked like a palace. Which king would have chosen such a god-forsaken island to construct a palace? they wondered. As they approached it, they saw it was a castle-like building – rather ancient – with ebony doors. The captain looked for a bell or a gong or a ring on the door. Nothing was seen. He then tried to push it. He found it heavy. Sindbad joined him, followed by one of the merchants. Between the three of them they pushed open the heavy door and entered the castle. The moment all of them were inside, the door closed by itself with a bang!





More spine-chilling was the sight that greeted them. The large hall they were standing in had huge piles here and there—piles of human bones! In one corner was a large-sized spit, beside a fireplace, presumably for roasting flesh.

"This seems to be an island of savages!" the captain mumbled. "If I had known this earlier, I wouldn't have led all of you to this horrible place!" he added apologetically. "Come on, let's go away from here."

They turned back and moved to the door, wondering how they would open it. Should they push it? Or should they pull? There was a ring,

but none of them could reach it, it was high above on one half of the door. "Sindbad, you get on to my shoulders and see whether you can reach it, though I doubt if you can pull it all by yourself."

As Sindbad was about to climb on to the captain's shoulders, the door flew open and there stood at the entrance a hideous-looking giant. He was as tall as a tree and had three eyes. The eye in the middle of the other two had no lid and it was wide open, whereas the other two appeared closed. He held a tree branch in one hand and was dragging another branch by the other. He let go both branches and grabbed the captain and one of the merchants. Probably the giant did not see tiny Sindbad, though he was standing right in front.

The giant moved towards the fireplace grunting and growling. The two captives wriggled in his hands as the others looked aghast, not knowing what to do. The giant spiked the two dwarfs in his hands to the spit and began turning it. The captain and the merchant had no life left in them, even to let out a cry. The giant struck two pieces of stones lying around and lit a fire. Soon, the two men on the huge spit were no



more than roasted meat. The giant pulled them out, pulled them apart into pieces, and munched. In no time he had devoured the whole stuff in his hands.

Sindbad and his fellow merchants had their faces turned away from the gory sight. They wondered whose turn it would be to become the giant's dinner. They all stood still without even contemplating a bid to escape from that place. Suddenly, there was silence and when they turned round, they saw that the giant had stretched himself on the floor. Was he asleep? The round eye on his forehead was still wide open, and they did not know whether he was equally wide awake.

Moments later, they heard him snore. They thought they should grab the opportunity and make good their escape. Luckily, the two tree branches the giant had brought in had prevented the door from closing automatically. They had a hard time climbing over them and rushing out into the open. Sindbad kept pace with the others. They ran and ran to be far far away from the fearsome giant in the castle.

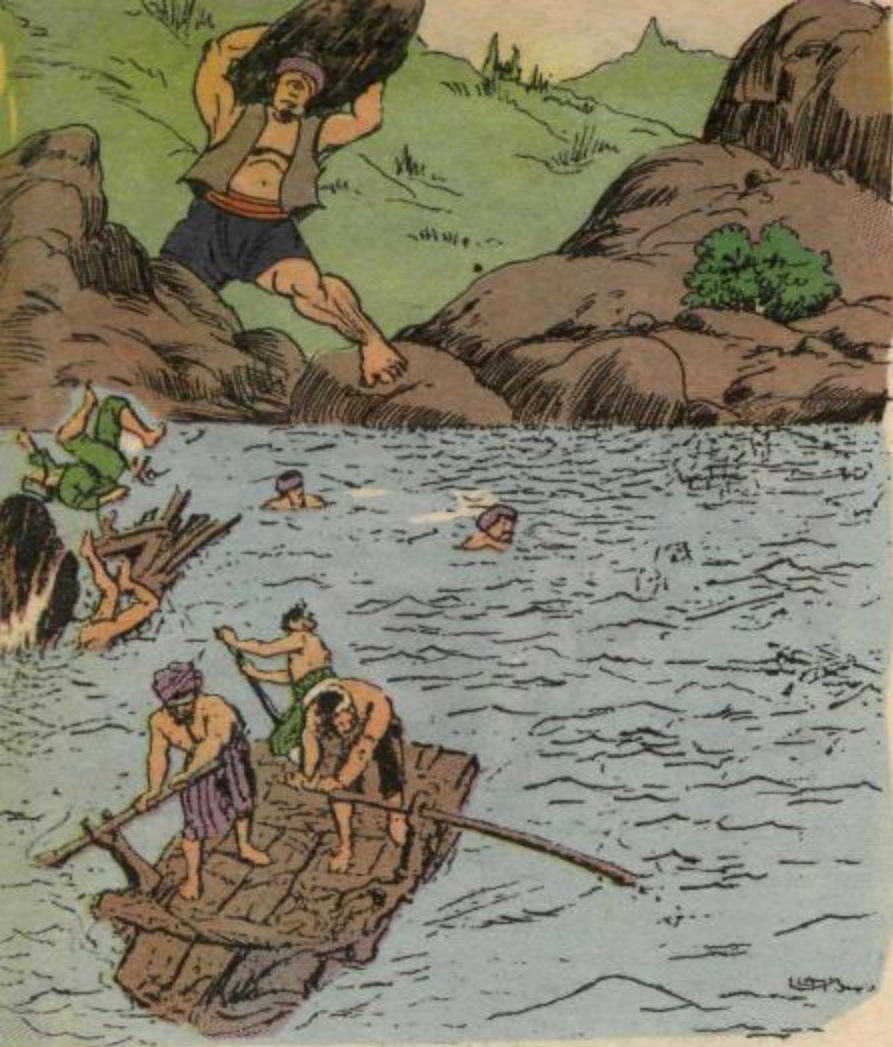
There was no human being in sight, and no animals either. They could not even hear any bird-songs. They slowed down to discuss among



themselves what they should do. Soon they reached a cliff. Down below lay the sea, now calm. There was no sight of their ship. Did all the hairy monkeys on the island go on the ship? They could see the rocky seafront at a distance.

Sindbad noticed some driftwood among the rocks and he suggested that they should try and make two or three rafts and put out to sea as fast as possible. Everyone agreed with him. They climbed down to the seafront and went about collecting all the logs lying around. There were just enough to make three rafts. They were ten in all including Sindbad.





He would get on to the biggest of the rafts with three other merchants.

Meanwhile, some of them searched for some rope or other material with which the logs could be tied. They found pieces of rope, and also managed to pull out roots and long barks of trees. Soon the three rafts were ready and they clambered on to them and rowed with all their might. Suddenly, stones began falling on them and they saw the giant standing on the cliff and hurling stones at them. One huge piece of rock hit one of the rafts and turned it upside down, throwing the occupants into the sea. The giant screamed

in joy. Another rock hit a second raft and the three men on it also fell into the sea. Sindbad and his three companions rowed hard and fast, but they could not evade the stones thrown from a height. Anyway they did not wait for a stone to hit their raft and jumped into the sea and swam with all the strength they could muster. There was no point in going back to the same island where they would only fall a prey to the giant.

As they swam, they saw the logs they had used for the rafts drifting in the sea. The four of them caught hold of a log each and tried to keep their heads above the water. Soon they were tired from swimming, so they just allowed themselves to drift.

By then night had set in and the high tide took them to the nearest shore. Before long, all four of them had joined each other and they decided to rest till daybreak. Soon they were fast asleep.

Sindbad woke with a start. Did he hear one of his companions shriek? He stood up and was shocked to see that a huge snake had coiled itself around the middle-aged merchant. He woke up the other two and between the three of them they tried to distract the snake so that it would leave its victim and probably go for



them instead.

Sindbad took off his turban and used it as a lasso. Just as he had expected, the snake uncoiled itself and went for the turban. He now shouted to his companions to rush to the tallest tree they could find. They ran, while he continued to tease the snake with his turban, and when he knew he too had got near a tree, he let go the turban, swiftly caught hold of the tree and climbed as fast as he could.

The snake waited for some time and when it found there was no movement on the trees, it slithered away under the watchful eyes of the four men on top of the trees. When they knew that the snake might not come back soon, they climbed down and went back to the beach to find whether they could now attract the attention of any passing ship.

After sometime there did come a ship that way. As Sindbad had by then retrieved his turban, it was held by him and a companion from either end and they began waving it like a long flag. Soon they saw a small boat heading towards the seashore. All four of them boarded it and in no time they were climbing the rope ladder hung from the ship.

It was Sindbad who went in first.



The captain of the ship greeted him: "Aren't you Sindbad? The famous Sindbad the sailor?"

Sindbad merely smiled. He introduced his companions to the captain, who then arranged for new clothes for them and sumptuous food. When they had rested for some time, the captain called them to his presence and said, "Brothers, I've with me on board some merchandise belonging to a passenger who died during our voyage. Will one of you accept it and trade with it so that whatever is earned can be passed on to his family when we go back?" He looked into the faces of each one of



his new passengers.

When Sindbad noticed that his three companions were hesitating, he said he would be willing to undertake the job. After all, he himself had no goods of his own to sell wherever they might stop en route. So, why not be of some help to a hapless family?

The captain was glad that he found someone to take charge of the merchandise. "Of course, you can keep a margin for yourself. We need give the family only a portion of it. Tell me, in what name shall I register it in my list?" he asked, turning to Sindbad.

"Sindbad the sailor!" the young adventurer said very proudly.



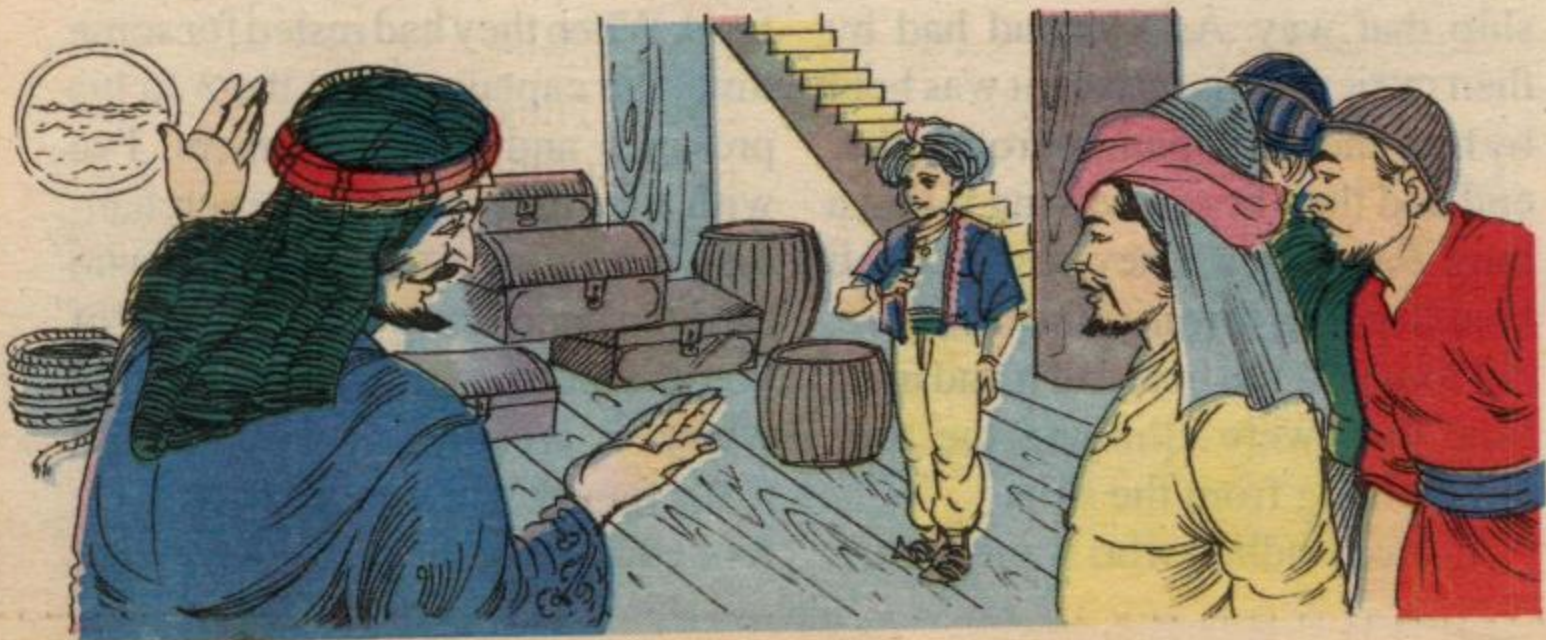
"That's how I earned that name from the captain of the ship which rescued us," Sindbad almost concluded his narration for the day. "We

went to two or three ports where I sold most of the goods for a good price. Finally, we reached Balsora, where most of the passengers alighted. The captain had also his home there. So, those of us who had gone from Baghdad made it to that place on camel back. I had enough of adventures and escapes from death. But do you think I could keep quiet for any length of time? It was not to be. I went on a fourth voyage. I shall tell you about it tomorrow if you care to come back and listen to my narration."

"Of course, Sindbad the sailor!" the friends chorused. "We shall come again tomorrow."

Sindbad signalled to Hindbad to stay back. After the others had left, he pulled out a tiny velvet bag and pushed into Hindbad's palms. "A small gift, my good friend."

(To continue)



RETURN OF THE WHITE SWAN



In days gone by, there nestled amidst verdant hills and green valleys, a lovely little kingdom. The land was free from poverty, famines, and plagues. Its people were happy, peaceful, and they lived in a sunny atmosphere of love and harmony.

A placid lake of crystal blue water lay in the heart of the realm. On its beautiful banks a majestic white swan had made its home. Ever since the bird had come to dwell there, many many years ago, never was there any strife or discord in the little kingdom. The beautiful rains came down when needed, and the fertile

earth smiled with golden crops.

The fame of the realm's refined and high culture spread far and wide. But its people owed their inner happiness and physical well-being to the benign presence of the white swan of grace. They prayed with humility and gratitude in their hearts to the creator of this wonderful world. Thus, with the strong faith and assurance that the white swan would never permit misfortune to come upon them, they continued to live in peace and joy.

But, alas, there dawned a day when misfortune did come on this blessed land. Famine struck and human be-



ings and cattle alike began to perish one after another. The parched earth hopefully looked up for some drops of life-giving rain. But the skies remained cloudless and the sun glared down mercilessly as if fuming in anger.

The grief-stricken people made a bee-line to the little blue lake to pray in the presence of the white swan. When they finally arrived, what did they see? Only a calm sheet of water, and no sign of the benevolent bird. Nevertheless, they ardently prayed for the gentle swan to return and save their land and their little ones. They prayed for long days

and nights; and they prayed in utter desperation. But the swan did not appear and with broken hearts they sadly wended their way back.

It was not before long that a sage happened to pass through the realm. He was more than one hundred years old and had flowing silvery hair and beard. But his face looked bright and young, and his eyes shone like those of a child.

The sorrowful king prostrated before him and said earnestly: "Save us from peril, O Blessed Soul! Ah, had the swan not left, this misfortune would never have befallen our land."

The sage contemplated awhile and then said with a faint smile: "But dost thou know, O King, why at all this winged visitor chose to dwell in your realm?"

"No. Though we have often wondered at our good fortune, none has yet found the reason," replied the ruler.

"Hear, then, Your Majesty, and let not pride taint your heart so pure! The swan was no ordinary bird but a godly being which cannot dwell in an atmosphere of disharmony and strife. Your kingdom was the only one on our little planet that was free of discord. Therefore, O King, this



wondrous bird of grace chose your kingdom for his home," said the old wayfarer.

"Then why did the swan leave us all of a sudden?" asked the bewildered ruler. "His departure has indeed reduced us to such a miserable state!"

"O King," replied the sage, calmly, "the white swan who graced your realm with his serene presence cannot live in a place where is to be found discord of any sort. Didn't I tell you?"

"But there was no discord in our land when the swan left us! Had there been any, I should have surely known about it. For, it is a law in the kingdom that the slightest conflict or quarrel that disturbs the peaceful atmosphere must at once be reported to me," said the king in a surprised tone.

"Nonetheless, the day the swan left, there was discord between two of your subjects living in the distant hills. They permitted hatred and envy to enter their pure hearts. They envied each other's possessions. Then, each planned how to usurp the other's property by crooked means," said the old man.

"Then I should have surely known about it!" exclaimed the king.



"How could you, Your Majesty, when all these evil thoughts went only in the minds of your two subjects?" replied the sage.

"What! Just because the thoughts of my subjects were vile, the swan departed from our land?"

"It is so, O Ruler of this blessed kingdom!" said the sage who then resumed his journey.

The following day, for the very first time in the kingdom, an announcement was made with the beating of drums. "Whosoever has let envy, greed, and hatred enter their hearts must present themselves on the banks of the lake within



seven days from now. For, indeed, it was for their evil thoughts that our guardian swan has departed and our land is stricken with famine and death."

A week later, as the sun rose over the hills, all the subjects of the realm assembled on the banks of the little blue lake. As soon as the king arrived, two men out of the crowd walked up and kneeling before him asked his forgiveness. Their heads hung in shame, for they knew that it was because of their thoughts of envy, greed, and hatred that the guardian swan had departed, leaving their land in misery. The king forgave and blessed them and prayed that such thoughts may never come to their hearts again. The two men then arose and embraced each other with tears in their eyes.

No sooner had they done this than, lo and behold! thundering

clouds gathered in the sky and the rains came down upon the thirsty earth and ended the drought. The people rejoiced, sank to their knees, and threw up their hands in gratitude.

Then all became quiet. The rains that were pouring in torrential vigour suddenly came to a halt. Across a glorious rainbow that spanned the skies could be seen a speck of spotless white slowly descending towards the earth.

The people cupped their eyes and looked up in silence, none daring to utter so much as a whisper. Gradually, the approaching speck took the form of the radiant white swan. The celestial visitor, serene and majestic, came down, softly flapping its wings, and once more gracefully glided on the crystal water of the little blue lake.

—Retold by Anup Kishore Das



Mementoes of History

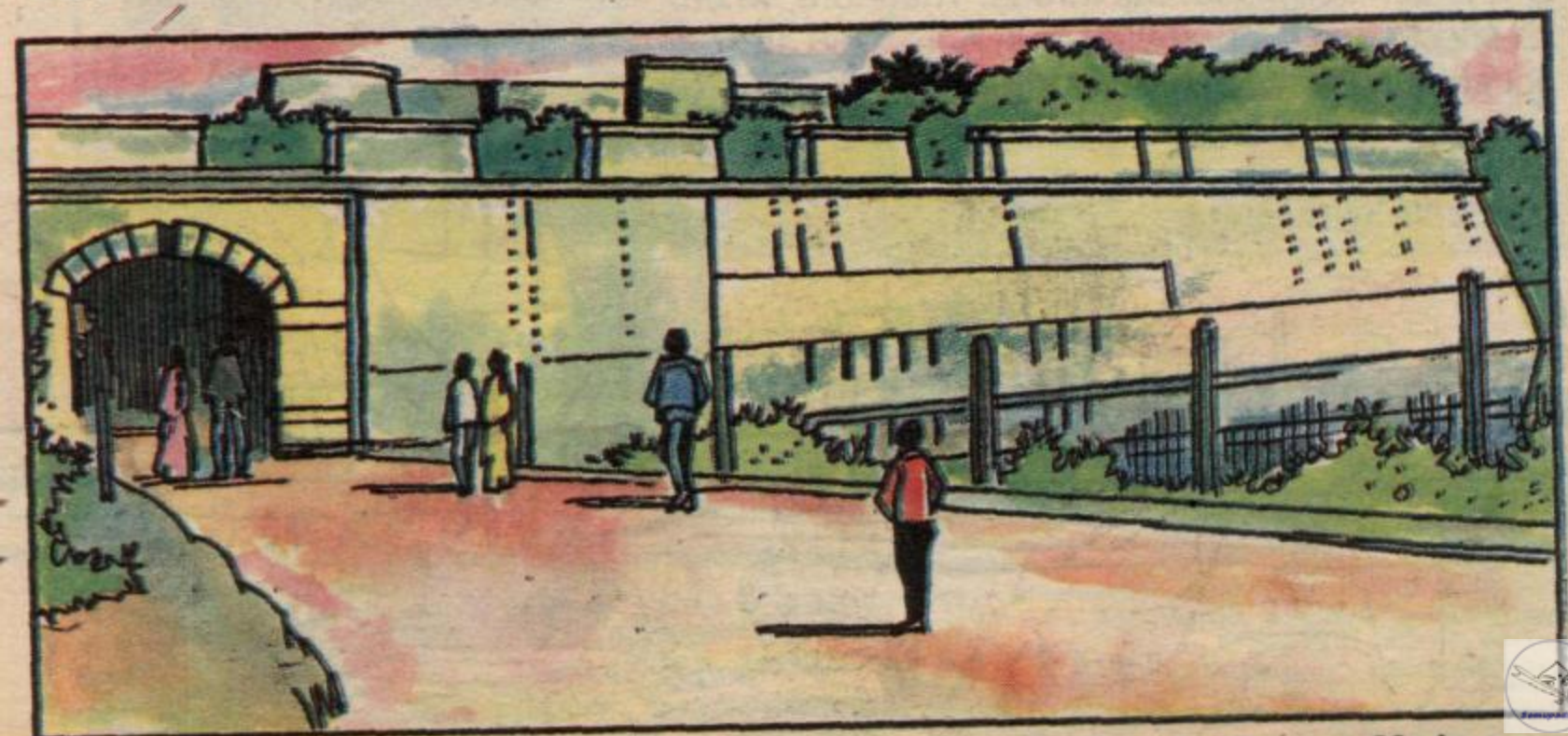
Script : Meera Ugra ♦ Artworks : Aritra

The Europeans started arriving in India at the beginning of the 16th century. The forts they built to guard their factories were purely functional.

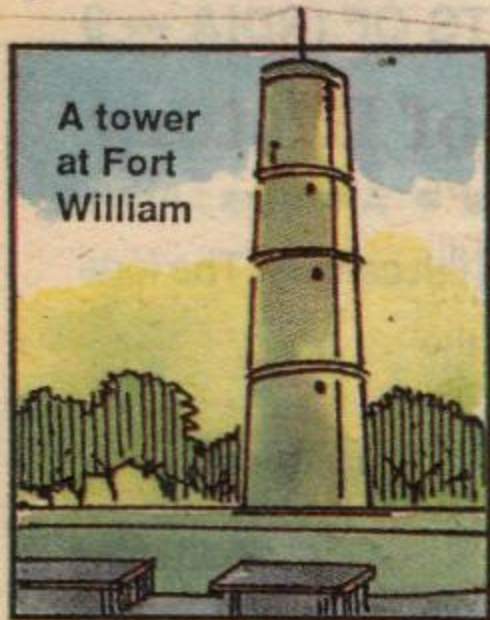
Fort St. George at Madras was built between 1640-1654. It stands at the mouth of the river Kuvam (Cooum), facing the Bay of Bengal. Thus it's protected on two sides by natural waters and a moat on the third. It faced several attacks by the Mughals, the Marathas and the French. In 1758, the French army arranged their guns on three sides and harassed the English garrison for two months till help arrived from Bengal. The French retreated leaving behind 52 cannons and many wounded men. This attack prompted the English to rebuild the fort almost entirely, under the guidance of a mathematics professor from Woolwich, Bartholomew Robins.



The first political cartoon!



Fort St. George, Madras



Ten years later, Hyder Ali of Mysore advanced towards Madras. On April 4, 1769 he virtually dictated the terms of a treaty signed between the two. And, he also left a lasting imprint of the event in a picture painted on one of the walls which showed him pulling the nose of the English governor! It is perhaps the first political cartoon of modern times, even before the style became popular in the West!

The Church of St. Mary's was the first Anglican Church in India. It was first built in 1678 and then rebuilt in 1758.

The fort now houses the Legislature and the Secretariat of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

In 1644, a surgeon of the East India Company, Gabriel Boughton, treated Princess Jahanara for burn injuries. Her grateful father, Shah Jahan, in return granted the Company, rights for free trade in Bengal. Later, the same doctor treated another royal lady in the family of Prince Shuja, the Viceroy of Bengal at the time, and was rewarded with permission to build a fort at Kalikata. Fort William at Calcutta took 11 years to build and was completed in 1707.

The Company's interference in the local affairs of Bengal alarmed Prince Siraj-ud-daula. He objected to the additional fortifications and mounting of guns on the walls of Fort William without the Nawab's permission. To add fuel to the fire, the English provided help to one of his rivals for the throne. Therefore, when he succeeded his grandfather in April 1756 and became the Nawab, his first act was to march upon Fort William.

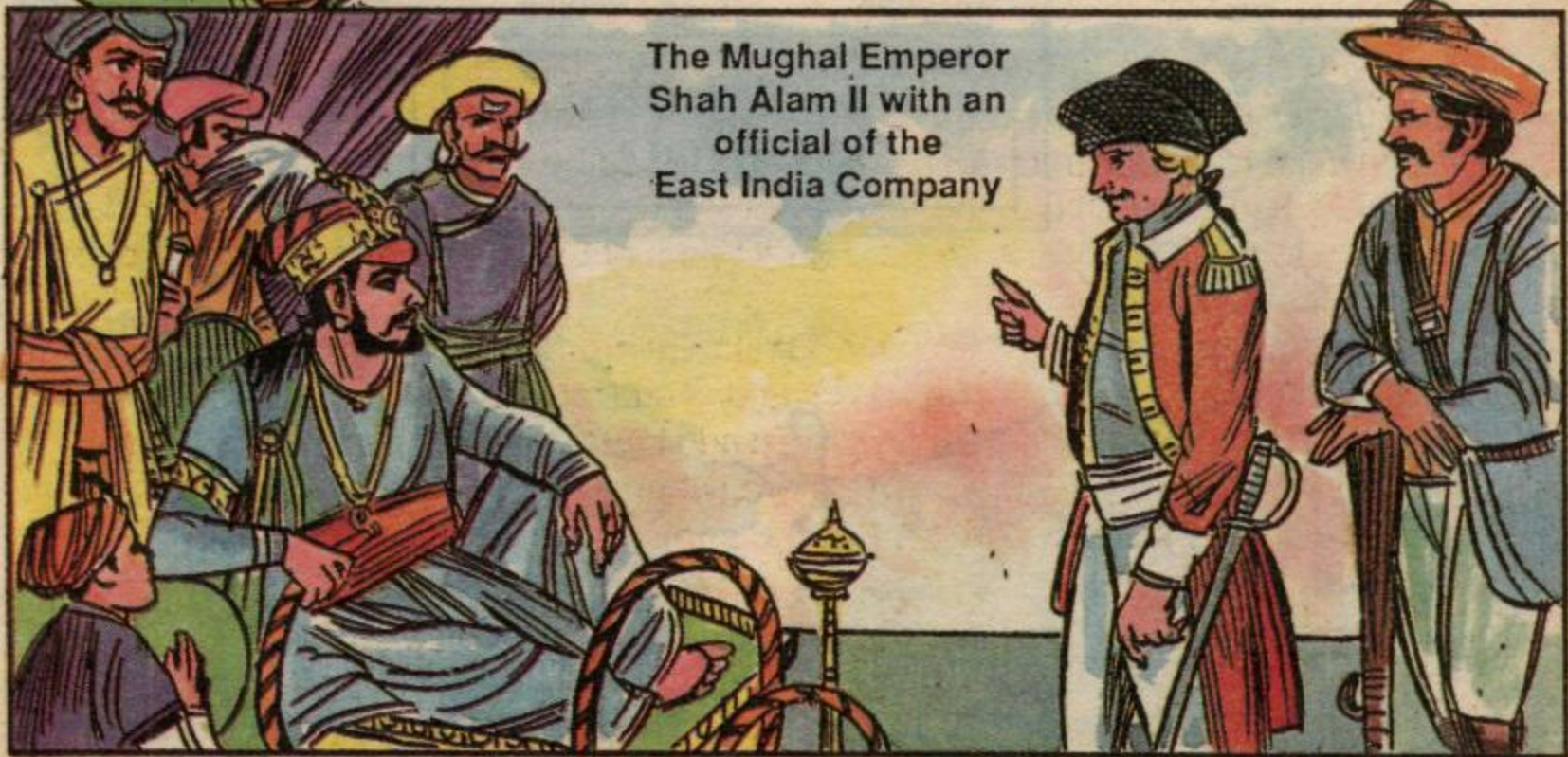
Fort William, Calcutta



Siraj-ud-daula



Governor Drake and some of his top officials took shelter on an anchored ship as Siraj-ud-daula approached. The defenceless fort surrendered on June 20, 1756. That evening 146 English prisoners—men, women and children—were held in a small room. The next morning only 23 of them were found to be alive. The cell was dubbed the *Black Hole of Calcutta* and the Nawab's treatment of the prisoners drew severe criticism from the British and others. But modern historians are of the opinion that Siraj-ud-daula was not directly responsible for the incident. Some even doubt the number of prisoners locked up in the cell and those who died.



The Mughal Emperor
Shah Alam II with an
official of the
East India Company

A year later, the Battle of Plassey turned the tables in the Company's favour and on August 17, 1765, the Mughal emperor, Shah Alam II, issued a *firman* and gave the East India Company the right to collect revenue in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

Later, Lord Clive was to boast about Fort William that it would be impossible to conquer, even if the whole of Hindustan marched upon it. The Fort is now in the possession of the Indian army.

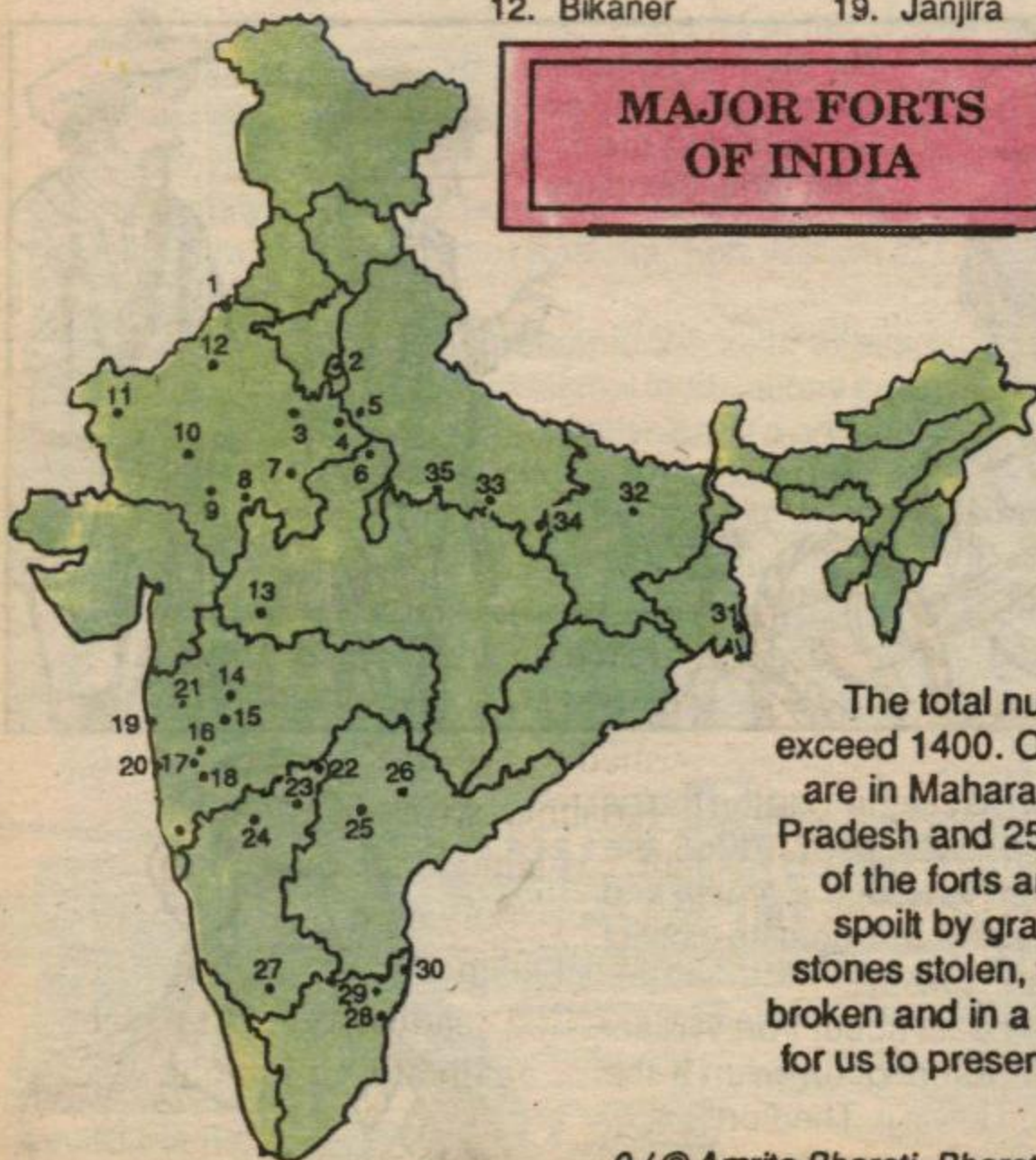


Robert Clive

The Fort at Gaur, built in 1198, on the confluence of the Ganga and the Mahananda is an old fort of Bengal. As are several other forts in Eastern India, namely Shishupalagarh, Barabati, Nowgong, Boda, Shyamnagar, Sarangagarh, etc. Similarly, Badami, Dindigul, Tiruchirapalli and Tellichery in the South; Dabhoi, Surat and Champaner in the West; Nabha, Hariparvat, Kot Kangra in the North and Jhansi, Chanderi, Burhanpur, in Central India, all have stories to tell.

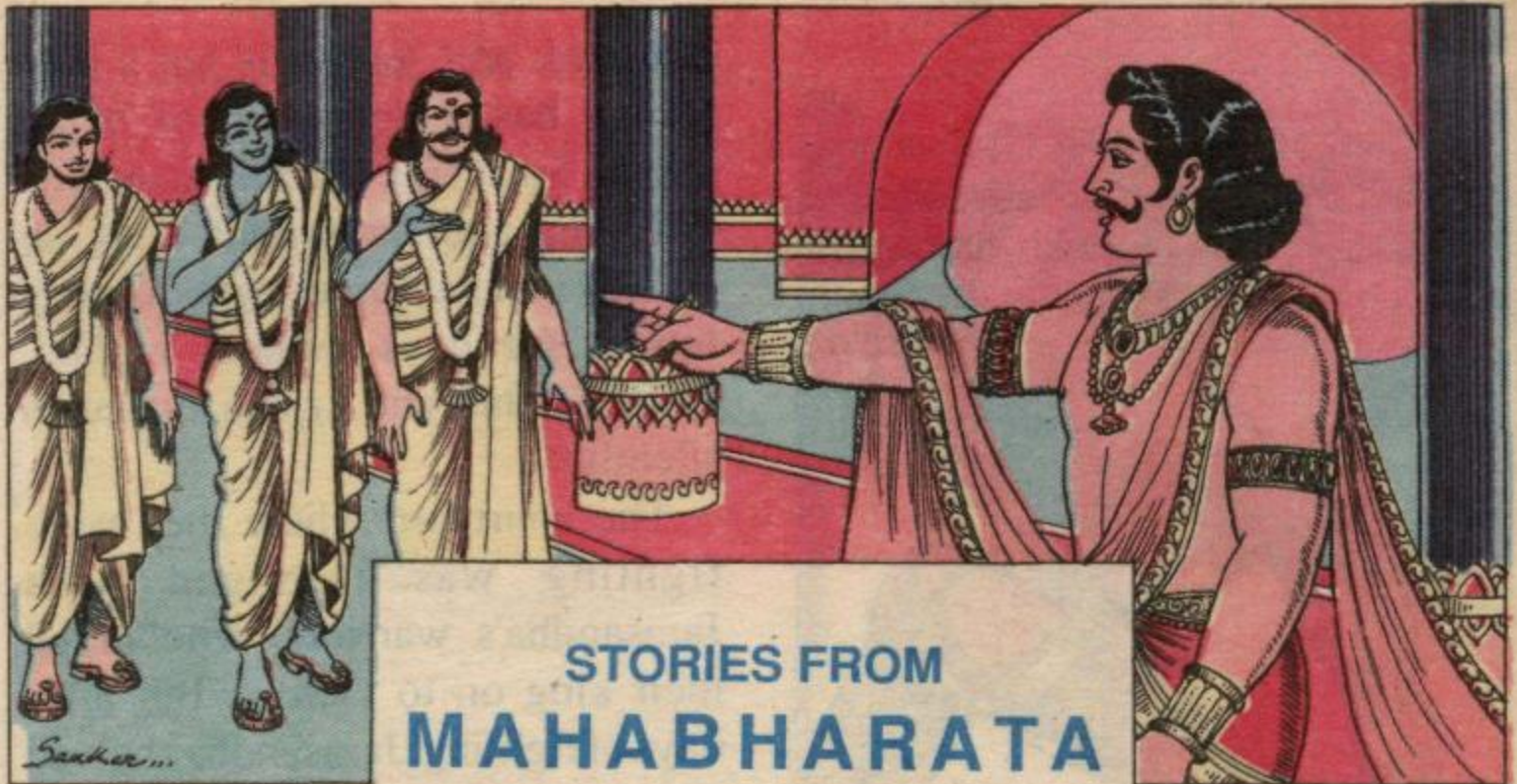
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|---------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Kalibangan | 3. Amber | 6. Gwalior | 13. Mandu | 20. Suvarnadurg |
| 2. Delhi | 4. Bharatpur | 7. Ranathambhor | 14. Daulatabad | 21. Rajgarh |
| | 5. Agra | 8. Chittor | 15. Ahmednagar | 22. Bidar |
| | | 9. Kumbhalgarh | 16. Shivner | 23. Gulbarga |
| | | 10. Jodhpur | 17. Singhgarh | 24. Bijapur |
| | | 11. Jaisalmer | 18. Raigarh | 25. Golkunda |
| | | 12. Bikaner | 19. Janjira | 26. Warangal |
| | | | | 27. Srirangapatnam |
| | | | | 28. Jinjee |
| | | | | 29. Vellore |
| | | | | 30. Madras |
| | | | | 31. Fort William |
| | | | | 32. Rohtasgarh |
| | | | | 33. Allahabad |
| | | | | 34. Chunargarh |
| | | | | 35. Kalinjar |

MAJOR FORTS OF INDIA



The total number of forts in India exceed 1400. Out of these, 656 forts are in Maharashtra, 330 in Madhya Pradesh and 250 in Rajasthan. Most of the forts are in ruins, their walls spoilt by graffiti, their statues and stones stolen, their paths and steps broken and in a state of disrepair. It's for us to preserve these mementoes of history.





The story so far:

Yudhishtira, the eldest of the five sons of Pandu, and now King of Indraprastha, resolves to perform the Rajasuya sacrifice, which marks the formal assumption of the Imperial title over all the kings of India. But, when Yudhishtira asks Sri Krishna for his advice, the latter wisely points out that as long as Jarasandha, the tyrant king of Magadha, lives, it will not be possible to assume the title of Emperor, for Jarasandha will certainly oppose it.

Yudhishtira's brothers, Arjuna and Bhima, readily agree that Jarasandha has to be defeated and killed. In the end, Krishna, Arjuna, and Bhima set out for Magadha disguised as men of religious orders, with the intention of challenging Jarasandha to single combat.

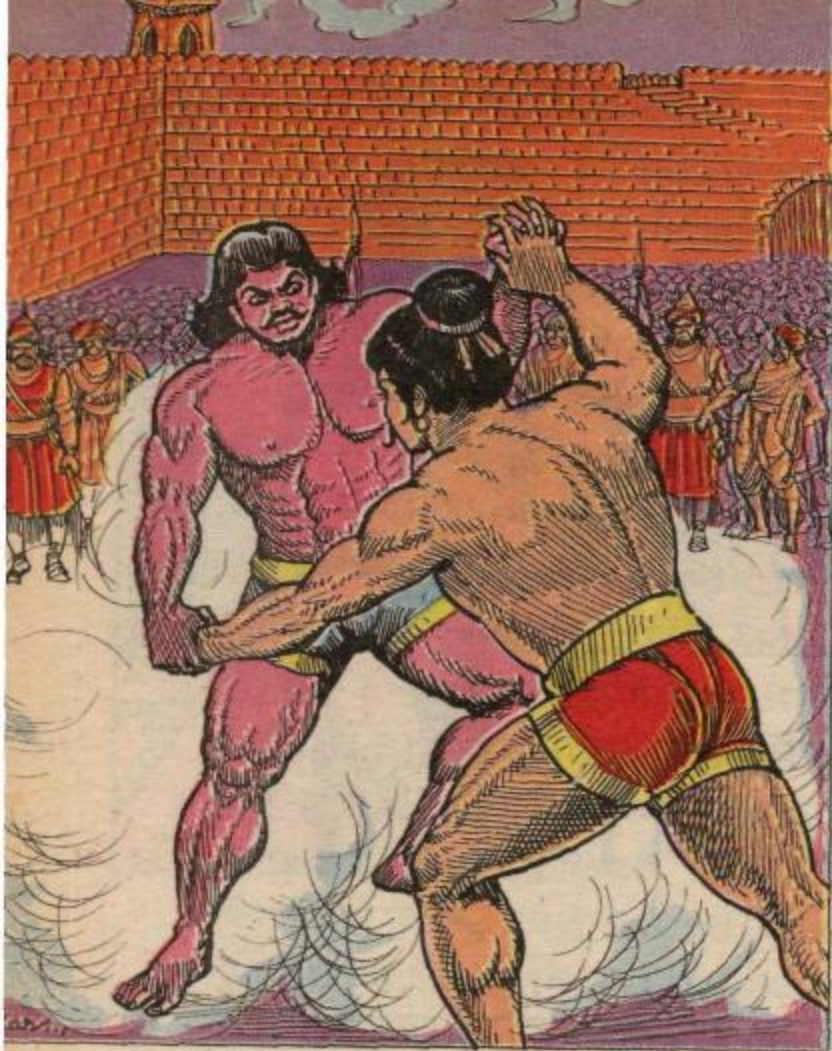
When Krishna and the two princes arrived in Magadha, they had no difficulty in obtaining an audience with Jarasandha, who at that time was sorely troubled with ill-omens, and therefore was only too happy to welcome any holy men who might be able to bring peace to his troubled mind.

Jarasandha received the three

conspirators in the hall of sacrifice, but Arjuna and Bhima made no reply to his words of welcome as they wished to avoid telling lies.

Krishna, speaking on their behalf, explained that his companions were very holy men and were under a vow of silence until midnight. So, Jarasandha readily agreed to meet the three again after midnight.





At midnight, Jarasandha's servants ushered Krishna and the two princes into the king's chamber. But Jarasandha became suspicious of their arrogant bearing and demanded: "Who're you? You look more like warriors than holy men. What brings you here?"

"You're right," replied Krishna. "We're warriors, and we're here to challenge you to single combat. I'm Krishna, and here are the Princes Arjuna and Bhima. Your evil reign has gone on far too long. So, choose the one you will fight with."

At this, Jarasandha burst out laughing, "Krishna, you're a mere

cowherd, and Arjuna is but a boy. Bhima has a reputation of being strong. So, let me tear him asunder."

Bhima and Jarasandha were so equally matched in strength that they fought for days without respite, while Krishna and Arjuna looked on silently.

The courtyard where they were fighting was thronged with Jarasandha's warriors, who urged their king on to victory. But after days of fighting, Jarasandha showed signs of exhaustion, and Krishna called upon Bhima to put an end to the tyrant. This whipped Bhima into a renewed frenzy and catching his opponent by the ankles, he tore his body into two halves. Thus Bhima separated the two halves that Jara, the demoness, had accidentally put together.

The kings and princes who were held in captivity by Jarasandha were released. Jarasandha's son was crowned King of Magadha, and then Krishna, Arjuna, and Bhima returned to Indraprastha.

With Jarasandha dead, the way was now clear for Yudhishtira to perform the great Yajna. His brothers were sent out with troops in all directions to proclaim his supremacy over all the kingdoms of the sub-



continent. Most of the monarchs gladly recognized the right of Yudhishtira to be proclaimed Emperor which, they felt, would surely herald a new era of peace throughout the land.

Dawned the day of the Rajasuya Yajna, and all the monarchs from far and wide came to Indraprastha to pay homage to Yudhishtira on his assumption of the title of Emperor.

King Dhritarashtra and the Kaurava princes, accompanied by Bhishma, Vidura, Drona, and Kripa, headed a great cavalcade from Hastinapura.

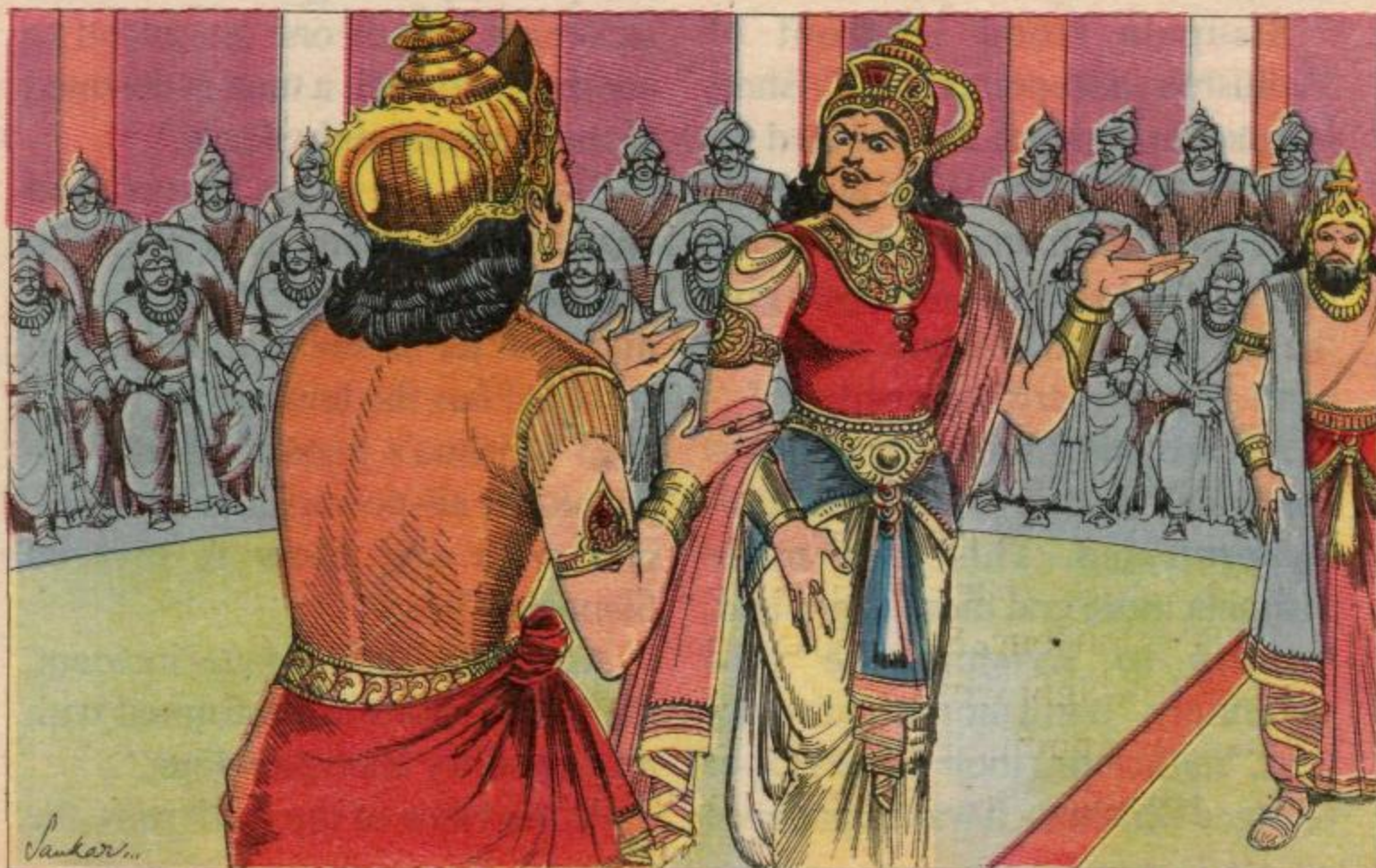
When the time came to perform the holy sacrifice, it was the custom

first to render honour to the guest who was considered most worthy and illustrious of all.

Yudhishtira requested his grand sire, Bhishma, for his opinion as to who should be honoured first. Bhishma, without hesitation, said: "The greatest amidst the great assembled here is Krishna, King of Dwaraka."

Yudhishtira was only too willing to follow this advice. At his command, Sahadeva offered to Krishna the most glorious honour.

Suddenly, there was a loud shout of protest. Everyone looked aghast as Sisupala, the King of Chedi, left his seat and strode into the centre of





the hall.

Sisupala stood in front of Yudhishtira and, pointing at Krishna, laughed in derision and shouted for everybody to hear: "What nonsense is this? With so many kings gathered here, is it not a disgrace that you give the first place to Krishna, a fool by birth and cowherd by breeding?"

A few of the assembled monarchs applauded Sisupala, but the majority protested. This only made Sisupala more and more angry and, turning to Krishna, he said sneeringly, "If in a moment of weakness, Yudhishtira took the advice of the aged Bhishma, it was impudence

on your part to accept such an undeserved honour!"

Krishna stood silent, but Yudhishtira, alarmed by this turn of events, tried to appease Sisupala. Sisupala had by now worked himself into a towering rage. He shouted: "It's obvious to us all that this would-be Emperor Yudhishtira, this senile Bhishma, and this cowherd Krishna are not fit to be counted among the proud monarchs of this land."

At last Krishna, in a calm voice, addressed the assembly: "Listen O righteous monarchs, in spite of his wrong and frequent outrage, never in my heart have I sought to do Sisupala any wrong. But his life is a sickening tale of one sin added to another, and such a man is destined to meet an untimely death."

Sisupala drew his sword and challenged Krishna to a fight. "I, Sisupala, seek no mercy from any man, but let us see if a lowly born cowherd has the temerity to fight."

In Krishna's hand suddenly appeared the all-powerful Sudarsana—and with one blow it severed Sisupala's head.

After this unfortunate incident, the holy Yajna was performed with all pageantry and splendour.

At the close of the festivities, the



monarchs, priests, and elders paid homage to Yudhishtira as Emperor, and took their leave. Sage Vyasa also came to say farewell. Yudhishtira received the sage with due respect. Being troubled by the death of Sisupala during the holy sacrifice, he asked the sage, "O master, you alone can remove my misgivings. Wise men had predicted that the future has catastrophic events in store. Please tell me, does the death of Sisupala end that bad pe-

riod?"

"My son," the sage replied, "much sorrow and suffering are to befall during the thirteen years ahead. Hundreds of kings will perish and the old order of things will change. No one can go against destiny. But, to you, I would say, rule your kingdom wisely and be steadfast in righteousness." With these words, Vyasa blessed Yudhishtira and departed for his hermitage.

(To continue)

Physical weakness is not the real weakness; weakness of the mind alone is the real weakness.

— Mahatma Gandhi

To make an allegation is one thing; to prove it is another.

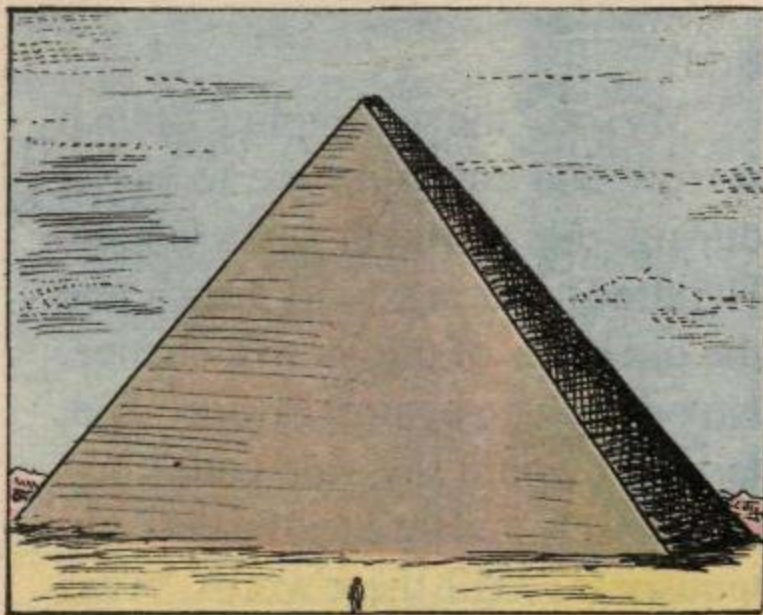
— Mahatma Gandhi



NEWS FLASH

Pyramid houses

The Pyramids of Egypt are among the Seven Wonders of the ancient world. They were constructed thousands of years ago and are believed to enclose royal burial chambers. It is the unique architectural pattern of the pyramid that caught the imagination of the modern world. It has a square base and each of the four sides of the square has an equilateral triangle sloping to meet at apex on top. Scientists have found out



that this unique way of construction was resorted to by the Egyptians to preserve everything kept inside, including dead bodies, for years and years together. Using this technique, packing experts advise preserving fruits and vegetables in cardboard cartons made in the shape of pyramids. Living inside pyramid-type rooms is believed to help maintain one's health and prevent illnesses. Who knows in the years to come, people will not build pyramid-houses and work places for themselves?

Tallest of all

Building contractors in Japan, however, have different views about building. Some 37 of them have come together to construct a 470-metre high building in Shanghai, a city in China. It will have 95 storeys and will tower above a 452-metre building coming up in Malaysia and another 443-metre tower under construction in Chicago, U.S.A. The Shanghai building is expected to cost something like 882 million dollars and be ready in the next five or six years.

Tower of teeth

Compared to the 470-metre tall building to come up in Shanghai, anything that is just 2.5 metres high will be not even the size of an ant. But think of an 'ant-hill' of that size made up of 28,000 human teeth! Dentist Ya qian and his six students did not throw away the teeth that they extracted from human mouths for 30 odd years, but collected them and began building a tower, using different kinds of gum and paste. This tower in Shanghai was recently examined by officials of record books for mention as a world record.

Rubber reservoir

While still on construction, this is about a dam 500 metres long and 3.5 metres high, entirely built of rubber. This achievement belongs to Nanyang City, in the province of Henan in Central China. Rubberised bags filled with gas or water cost less and are more efficient than dams built of stones and cement.



New Tales of King Vikram and the Vampire

A ceiling on desires

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time; gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O King! You seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite, as if you wish to achieve something. I pity you. Instead of enjoying comfortable sleep on a cozy bed, you're still coming after me. Could I ask you something? Are you doing this to help someone like a magician or a sorcerer or who practises witchcraft? If so, you'll only be frustrated in your attempt. Because all their actions will only harm people





who will suffer at their hands. Do you know what happened to Kedarnath who became king? Listen to his story." The vampire then began his narration.

Long ago, on the east coast lay a village where lived a wealthy man called Badrinath. In course of time he lost all his wealth and his debts mounted. He was left with just the house in which he lived. He began worrying about clearing his debts and soon he was bedridden. He was unable to get up even to attend to his daily needs. His son, Kedarnath, was only twenty at that time.

One day he called his son to the

bedside. "My son, it was my greed that has brought us to this plight. You must take it as a lesson in life. You should not become greedy and desire for wealth in excess of your needs; you'll then lose everything. It is an auspicious day today. I want to tell you something very important. You go and take a bath, and then come back to me."

Kedarnath took an unusually long time to finish an elaborate bath. By the time he went back to his father's room, it was too late; Badrinath had by then died. He was unable to know what his father had in mind, what he wished to tell him. When the villagers came to know of the tragedy, they went to his help to perform the ceremonies.

Next day, Kedarnath found a crowd in front of his house. His father had borrowed money from all of them. They now demanded their money back right then and there. They told him that his father had asked them to collect their amounts from his son a day after his death. Kedarnath now guessed what his father had wished to tell him. He pleaded for time to settle their accounts. But they were not willing to wait any longer for the payment. Kedarnath was now in a dilemma.



One of the creditors, Kasinath, then said: "I shall repay all your father's debts. But on one condition. Against the amount you owe me and the monies I pay these people, you must give up your right on this house and compound and whatever lies here. Will you agree?"

Kasinath turned to the crowd. One of them said, "Fair enough." He told Kedarnath: "I realise your difficulties and dilemma. That's why I offered to help you. All the money your father had borrowed from them, I shall pay back. He had taken money from me, too. You hand over possession of the house to me and see that you and your mother leave the place by tomorrow morning. Otherwise, I may think of driving you away!"

Kedarnath's mother was listening to all this conversation. "My son, we're most unfortunate people. We are duty bound to return all the money that your father had borrowed. Now that Kasinath has offered to pay up all our debts, it is better that we gave him possession of our property. However, there's an old trunk on the loft. I don't want to part with that. We shall not take with us anything other than that box. Let everything else be divided amongst



the creditors. We must leave the place tonight itself."

Kedarnath climbed up to the loft and pulled out the old trunk. He dusted it and then opened to see what was inside. There was nothing else other than a diary-like book. Someone had written the history of his family. At the end of it he read a *mantra*: "Badrinarayana! Badrinarayana! Badrinarayana!"

Beneath the three words was an advice: *If one were to chant the word three times in front of anyone, he would be granted whatever he wished for.* However, there was also a word of caution: *no one else should*





be told about the mantra or its effect.

The young man guessed that what his father wanted to tell him before he died might have been about the trunk, the book, and the message it contained. He got down from the loft and, without telling his mother where he was going, he went to Kasinath and engaged him in conversation. As they talked, Kedarnath managed to utter the three words: "Badrinarayana! Badrinarayana! Badrinarayana!"

Kasinath, who was talking to Kedarnath in a rough tone, suddenly underwent a transformation. "My boy!" he held his hands affectiona-

tely. "Tell me, what exactly do you want from me?"

"I would be happy if you repay my debts," said Kedarnath in all humility.

"All right, I shall do so," responded Kasinath. "Look here, I don't wish to deprive you and your mother of your property. You both may go back and continue to stay there."

Kedarnath went back and sometime later he and his mother returned to their house. The woman wondered how Kasinath had a change of heart so suddenly. She asked her son about it, but he did not give any explanation. Kedarnath, too, could not believe that the simple mantra had such an effect.

Kedarnath suddenly realised that there was nothing in the house to cook a meal with for both of them. He went to the grocer and repeated the three words. The shopkeeper packed whatever the youngster asked for and sent him away with a smile.

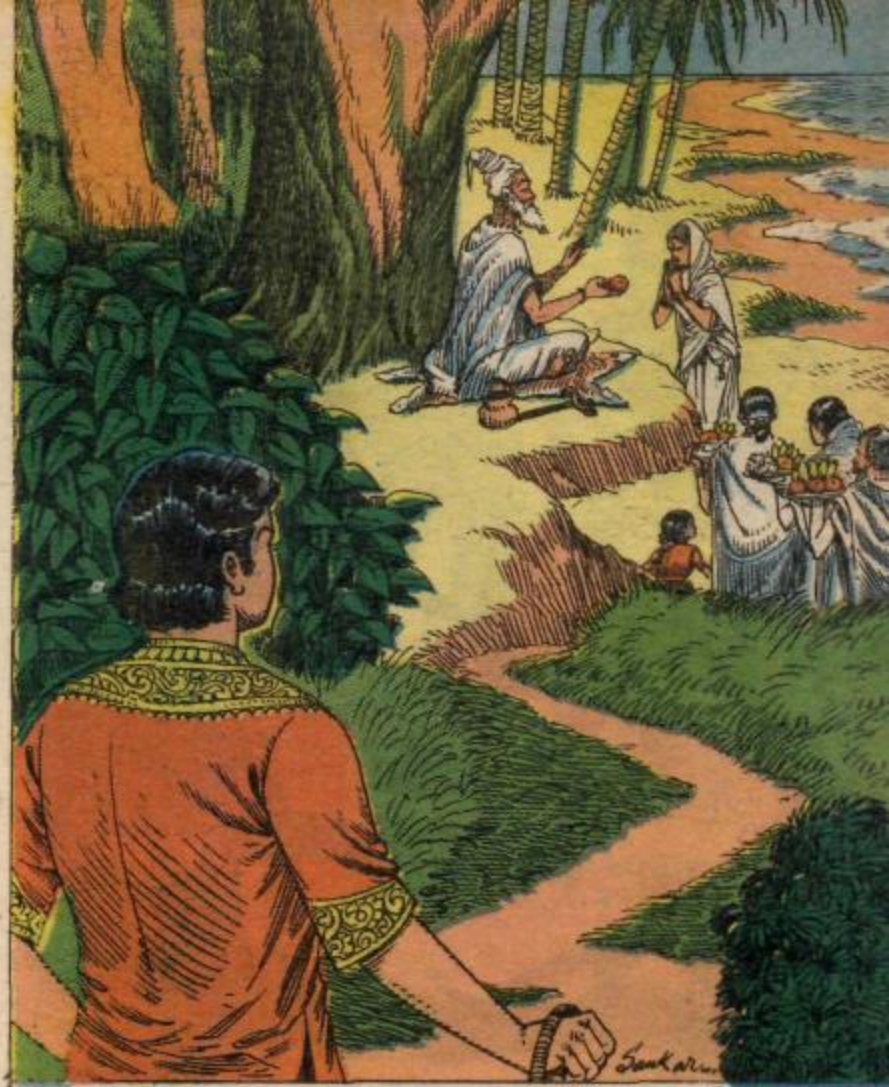
One night, a robber gained entry into the house of Kedarnath, who was fast asleep. His mother, who was sleeping in the next room, was woken up by some strange noise. She thought she heard someone dragging the metal trunk on the floor.



Was it Kedarnath? But why should he drag it along the floor? It had gone back to its place on the loft. Did he bring it down in the night? If he wanted to open it and look into it for anything, he would have struck a light. But there was no light coming from his room. These thoughts disturbed the lady. She got up, lit a lamp, and went up to his room. "Kedarnath!" she called out. The thief dropped whatever he was holding in his hand to the floor. The noise woke up Kedarnath. In the light from the lamp in his mother's hand, he saw the intruder, who pulled out a dagger. Kedarnath chanted the mantra. Suddenly, the thief threw away the dagger, ran out of the house, and disappeared in the darkness.

Kedarnath's mother could not contain her curiosity. The next morning, she asked him: "Everything appears strange, my son! The robber runs away from us; shopkeepers send us whatever we want; the people show great respect and affection for you. Have you come by any mysterious power?"

"Nothing like that, mother," replied Kedarnath, trying to sound as convincing as possible. "Father's spirit is always with us, and he's helping us."



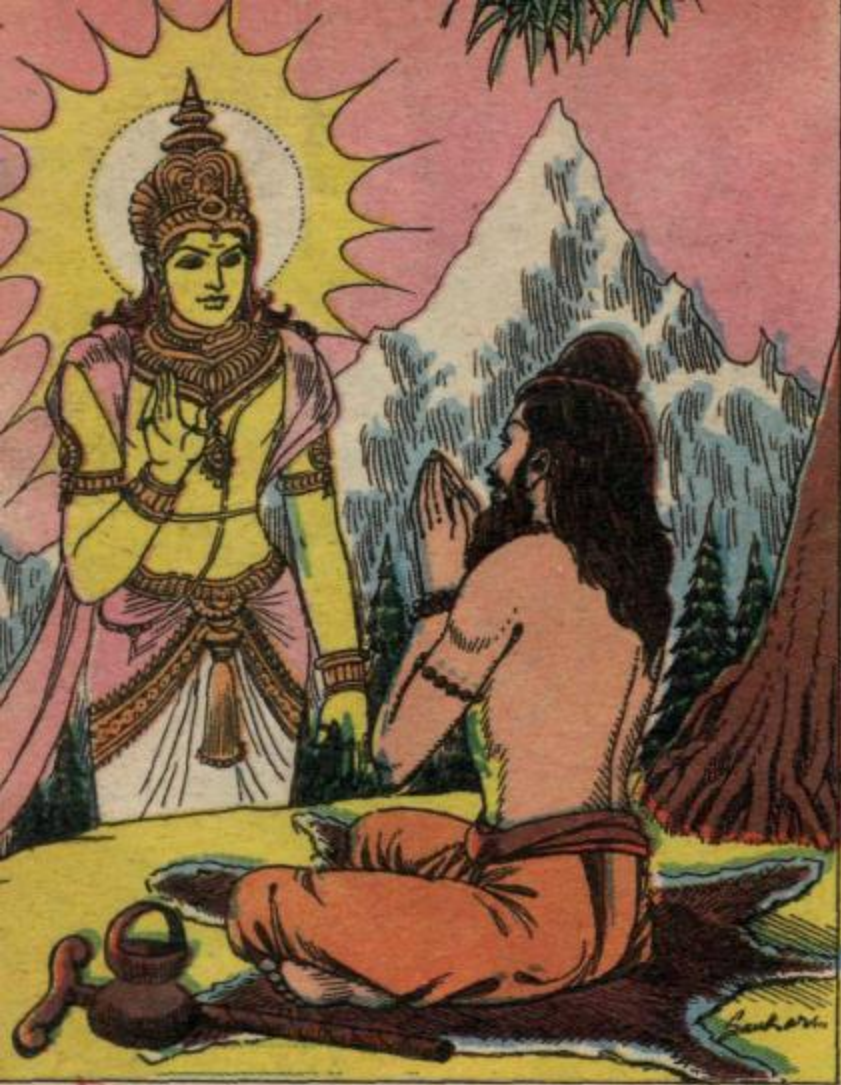
Days passed, and Kedarnath and his mother led a happy, contented life. One day, their village had a visitor – Taponidhi. People considered him a sage as he was able to cure them of their illnesses, and give them advice and solve their problems. Kedarnath very much wished to befriend him with the help of his mantra.

One day, he called on Taponidhi and as he sat before the sage, he began chanting 'Badrinarayana!'

"You're a blessed person, my son!" said Taponidhi. "What can I do for you?"

"I get all that I need without





'You must prove you're a good person. You did tapas to become an emperor. That's not the way to become an emperor. For that you must be clever, intelligent, and you must also put in effort. You must not waste your tapas to achieve such mundane things.' I asked him, 'You mean to say that the tapas I went through all these years was just a waste?' He consoled me by saying, 'No, not all. You've acquired something of which you'll realise only later in life. All right, I shall teach you a few things.' 'And with that I shall try to become an emperor,' I said with confidence."

difficulty, swami!" said Kedarnath. "I would request you to impart some of your powers to me."

"Did you say my *powers*?" Taponidhi asked him curiously. "Then you must listen to my story. Once I very much wanted to become an emperor. I went to the Himalayas and began an intense *tapas*. The lord seemed to have been pleased with me, so he appeared before me, and I told him of my desire. 'The emperor who rules the world now is a good person. I cannot give you that position. You may ask for anything else.' I asked him: 'But am I also not a good person?' To which he replied,

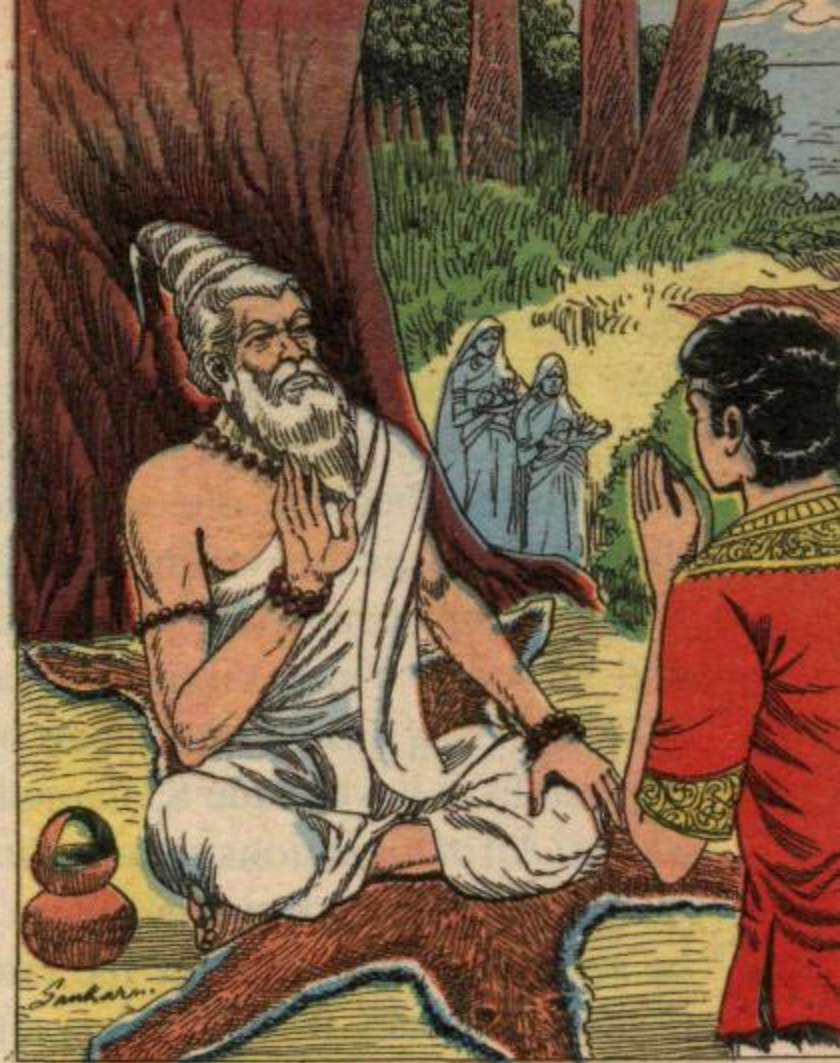
Taponidhi paused for a while and then continued: "The lord then told me, 'One should use one's powers only for a good purpose. If he desires for more, he'll only lose everything. So, better give up your tapas, lest you became greedy. Tapas is undertaken to reach godhead. Remember that.' I realised my mistake. I pleaded to the lord to take me into his fold. And the lord said: "Whoever is born has to do something good for the world. You haven't done anything good for the people. You can become one with god only after that.' He then disappeared. Ever since then I've

been wandering, doing good to others."

Taponidhi concluded his story about himself. Kedarnath now realised his folly. He had been really misusing the power of the mantra for his own gain. His father, too, must have misused the mantra, with the result he ultimately lost everything. He remembered his father confessing that it was his greed that brought about his downfall. Kedarnath also feared that if he were to be greedy like his father, he too might suffer his father's fate. He did not want anything like that to happen.

Taponidhi found the young man in a contemplative mood. "My boy! You seem to have acquired some magic mantra. Now I cannot deny you what you've asked for. I shall go away from here only after I gave that to you."

"You did tapas with the aim of becoming an emperor, swami," said Kedarnath. "However, with the powers that you received from the tapas, you began doing good to others. Thereby you've really qualified yourself to become an emperor. But you no longer wish to become one. I've no ambition to become an emperor. At the most I would like to be the ruler of this



kingdom. You must bless me to fulfil that wish."

"Have you forgotten the lord's advice so soon, my boy?" remarked Taponidhi.

"No, sire!" responded Kedarnath. "Probably you haven't understood my statement. I didn't mean that the ruling king should be changed. He doesn't have any sons. He has only a daughter. Her father is shortly holding a reception where she is expected to choose someone as her husband. I wish to be present there and succeed in winning the hand of the princess. I need your blessings for that." I can then hope to become

king one day."

"All right, Kedarnath," said Taponidhi. He blessed the young man. "Henceforth, your future will be bright. Whatever you wish for will be fulfilled. May you enjoy happiness and prosperity. I shall now go and become one with the divine." The sage then left the village.

The vampire ended the story there and turned to King Vikramaditya. "O King! Was it right on the part of Taponidhi to have made Kedarnath a king? All of his actions were for his own benefit and advantage. Wasn't he selfish? What would be the fate of the kingdom if such a person became its ruler? Wouldn't he make use of the mantra to the detriment of his people? The sage was aware of all this, yet he blessed Kedarnath to help him fulfil his desire. Why did he do that? If you know the answers and still prefer to remain silent, I

need not specially warn you as to what will happen to you. Your head will be blown to pieces!"

"Taponidhi did not do anything wrong," said the king to satisfy the vampire. "He had made a correct assessment of Kedarnath. He was selfish in the beginning. And to free him of selfishness, he told him his story, of his own experiences. His father, too, had confessed to Kedarnath that greed was the cause of his downfall. All this prompted Kedarnath to change his attitude. He knew that he had to acquire wealth to escape greed. And the only way to acquire wealth was to become a king. Taponidhi understood his determination and so decided to bless him."

The vampire realised that the king was too smart for him. He flew back to the ancient tree, carrying the corpse with him. Vikramaditya drew his sword and went after the vampire.





Boons, but what use?

At the edge of the forest lived a woodcutter and his wife. They were poor, but managed to make both ends meet with whatever little they earned by selling the wood in the market. Their needs were few, so the days were not difficult.

Three wealthy gentlemen liked the quietude of the place and built houses there. After watching them enjoy a comfortable life, the woodcutter and his wife, too, wished to lead a similar life. "Can't we live like them?" asked the simple woman of her husband.

"They've plenty of money," remarked the woodcutter, in his little wisdom. "Unfortunately, they don't know how to make use of all that wealth. If I, too, had that kind of money, do you know how I would have lived?"

"We aren't fortunate like them!" complained the woodcutter's wife.

"Long long ago, gods and goddesses used to appear before devotees and grant them boons. It looks as though we may have to please some gods to grant us our wishes. We shall only spend the rest of our lives nurturing such dreams." The woman heaved a heavy sigh.

Before a moment had passed, there stood in front of them a beautiful goddess. "I heard your conversation," she said. "You're grieving that your wishes are not fulfilled. I shall grant you three boons. You must be satisfied with them and lead a contented life. But remember, you can have only three wishes, and one at a time." She blessed them and disappeared as suddenly as she had appeared.

The husband and wife then discussed for a long time. What should they wish for? Somehow, they could not take a decision. "All right, we shall make use of the boon

when we think of something," said the woodcutter.

"That's right," agreed his wife. "Meanwhile, let me cook something for our dinner." She left for the kitchen. While she was peeling and cutting vegetables, she thought aloud. 'If only there was some fish going, I would have made a nice curry.' No sooner had she given expression to her wish than a few fish dropped in front of her. Her surprise knew no bounds. In fact, the woodcutter also witnessed the strange happening as he had gone to the kitchen to find out what his wife was mumbling.

"You're a fool to have wished for fish!" the man chided her. "You've wasted one precious boon! Aren't you left with some intelligence? Just think! Suppose you had wished for a garland of fish, you would have made a good sight!"

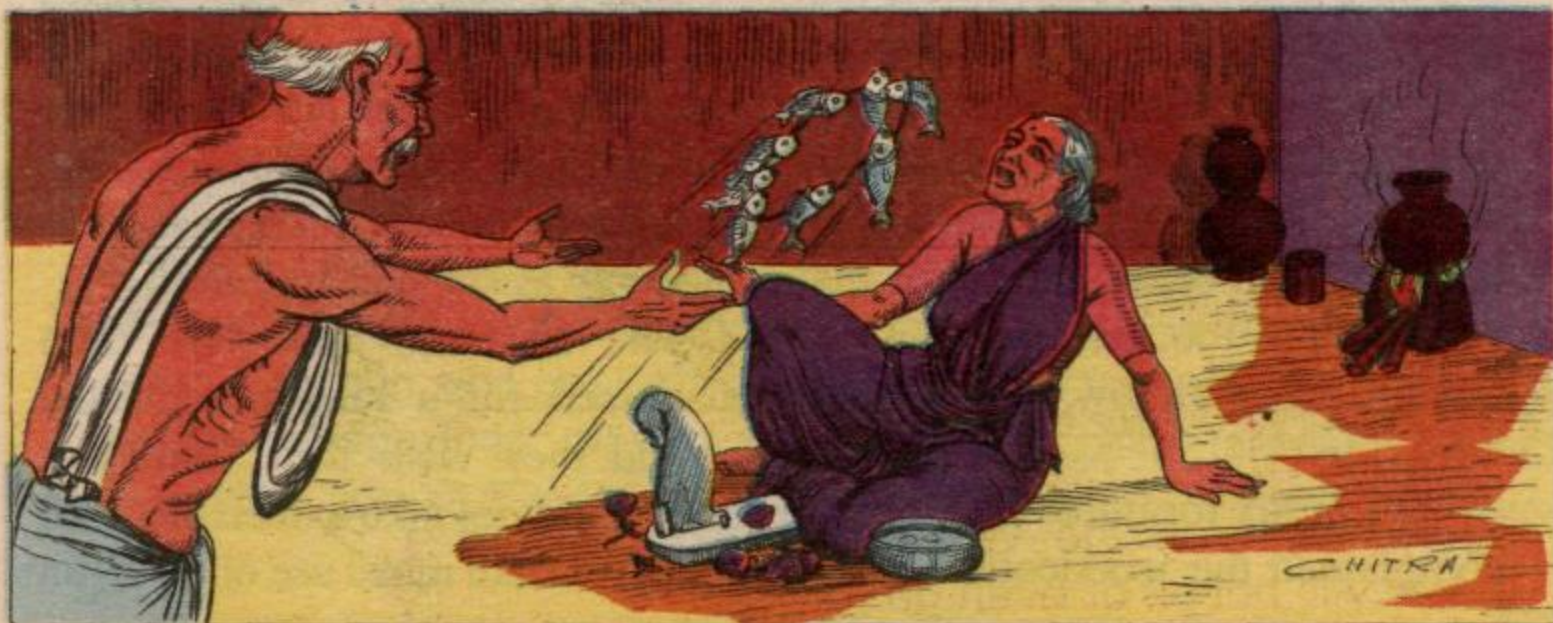
The moment the words came out

of his mouth, the fish on the floor were turned into a garland, which dropped over her head and fell around her neck.

"You scolded me for wasting one boon!" wailed the women. "Now, what have *you* done? You've gone and wasted a second boon!"

She then tried to take off the garland. But it had got stuck around her neck. "I wish I could take this off my neck, otherwise I won't be able to do any work!" she cried aloud as she pulled hard at the garland. In the next moment the garland of fish came off in her hands. Thus the third wish was also fulfilled.

The woodcutter and his wife were disappointed and also angry with each other. "Because of our foolishness, the three boons given by Devi went waste! Let's not be greedy any more," uttered both of them together. They had to be contented with a fish curry.



Devil's abode

In good old days, the wood for the slates used by children came from a tree which has a botanical name – *Alstonia scholaris* – associated with scholars and schools. Do you know, in English it is called the *Devil's Tree*? In Hindi it is *Chhatin*, in Assamese *Chhaiten*, in Marathi *Shaitan*, in Oriya *Chatinan*, and in Bengali *Chhatim*. The word for 'Satan' in Malayalam is *chaitan* or *shaitan*, but the tree has a more respectable name in that language – *Pala*; it is *Palaigh* in Tamil and *Palasi* (palas: demon) in Telugu. In Kannada it is *Maddale*. The Sanskrit name is *Saptaparna* (sapta: seven); its four to seven 10 to 20 cm long leathery leaves appear in a whorl.

This large evergreen tree attains a height of 25 metres. The bark is rough, of a dark grey colour; the branches, too, are whorled. The flowers are small, greenish white in colour and spice-scented. The fruits, 30 to 60 cm long, hang in pairs, forming dense clusters.

The tree is found in regions which remain moist during the major part of the year. The wood is soft and is, therefore, used for inferior quality furniture, packing cases, pencils, and matchsticks.

The people in some parts of India believe that evil spirits choose this tree for their abode. Some tribals in the Western Ghats will not sit or even pass beneath this tree!



DADHICHA

Dadhicha was a descendant of the great Rishi, Atharvan, who gave us the fourth Veda, the *Atharva Veda*. As a young sage, Dadhicha devoted himself to the practice of severe austerities. He meditated with such deep concentration that even his bones assumed some sanctity.

Indra, the king of gods, taught Dadhicha several secrets of Nature, on condition that he would never disclose them to anyone. But the two godly brothers, the Asvins, who were great healers and physicians, induced him to reveal some of his knowledge to them. Dadhicha obliged the two seekers.

When Indra came to know that

Dadhicha had not kept his word, he decided to behead him. The Asvin brothers came to know about it. They themselves cut off Dadhicha's head and fixed a horse's head in its place. Once Indra had acted according to his decision, the Asvin brothers brought out Dadhicha's original head and fixed it on his headless body. Dadhicha was once again his normal self.

During a long war with the demons, the gods were told that only the sanctified bones of Dadhicha, when used as weapons, could ensure victory for them. Dadhicha heard this. He sat in meditation on the banks of the river Daya and left his body, so that his bones could serve the purpose of the gods. Thus, his unique gesture remains a luminous example in the annals of sacrifice.



DO YOU KNOW?

1. A disciple of Guru Nanak accompanied him during his wanderings, playing the *rabab*, while Nanak sang. His name?
2. A river in India is known by four different names. Which is the river? What are the names?
3. In which sport do the winners go backwards and the losers forwards?
4. What is the average rate of respiration?
5. South India has only one rock-cut Jain temple. Where is it?
6. Who founded Persia?
7. In Indian mythology, who died from an arrow that struck his heel?
8. What is the national bird of the United States of America?
9. Name the highest peak south of the Vindhya.
10. Who was the first Greek to build a library of books?
11. How did the 'flying snake' get its name?
12. Which is the world's longest rail line?
13. Four seas have colours in their name. Which are they?

ANSWERS

- | | | | |
|----|---|-----|---|
| 1. | Mardana, who was the Muslim servant of an Afghan chieftain. Nanak was his accountant. When the chieftain died, Mardana became a disciple of Nanak, who also had a Hindu disciple called Bala. | 6. | Cyrus the Great - between 500 and 400 B.C. Persia is now known as Iran. |
| 2. | The Brahmaputra is called Tsang Po in Tibet, Dibang and Siong in Arunachal Pradesh, and Meghna in Bangladesh. | 7. | Lord Krishna. |
| 3. | Judo. | 8. | The bald-headed eagle. |
| 4. | Between 15 and 18 times. This may increase when you perform physical exercises, or when you get excited. | 9. | The 2,700 metre high Anaimudi or Elephant's Peak, in the Western Ghats, in Kerala. |
| 5. | In Sittanavasal, Pudukottai, Tamilnadu. It was built some 1,400 years ago by the Pallava king, Mahendravarman I, who was a Jain by birth. He became a Shaivite in later life. | 10. | Euripides (480-406 B.C.) |
| | | 11. | It flattens its body like a ribbon and sails in the wind like a glider, between trees. |
| | | 12. | The Trans-Siberian railroad, from Moscow to Vladivostok - 5,864 miles. It takes 8 days to cover the distance. |
| | | 13. | White Sea, Black Sea, Red Sea, and Yellow Sea. |



SPORTS

YESTERDAY
TODAY
TOMORROW

Last Innings

The legendary W.G. Grace was playing in the last match of his cricketing career. On July 25, 1914 (he was 66 years old then) he scored 69 runs for Eltham against Grove. Nowadays most cricketers announce their retirement before they are 40.

One minute in 18 years

That is how the world record for women's 5,000 metres improved between 1977 and 1995. In



July 1977, Janice Merrill, of the U.S.A., covered the distance in 15 minutes 37 seconds. The record made by F e r n a n d a

Ribeiro, of Portugal, on July 22 this year was 14:36.45. This was at a meet in Hechtel, Belgium, where she bettered the time of 14:37.33 set by Norway's Ingrid Kristiansen in August 1986 in Stockholm. The world record had stood with Kristiansen in July 1981 (15:28.43) and June 1984 (14:58.89).

A 'Windy' Record

Ivan Pedroso, of Cuba, set a new world record in men's long jump at Sestriere, Italy, on July 29 by leaping one extra centimetre over American

Mike Powell's 1991 record of 8.95 metres made in Tokyo. In the heats earlier, Pedroso had leapt 8.89 metres. He was stated to have been assisted by wind when he made the final jump. Though the wind speed recorded was only 1.2 metres per second – well within



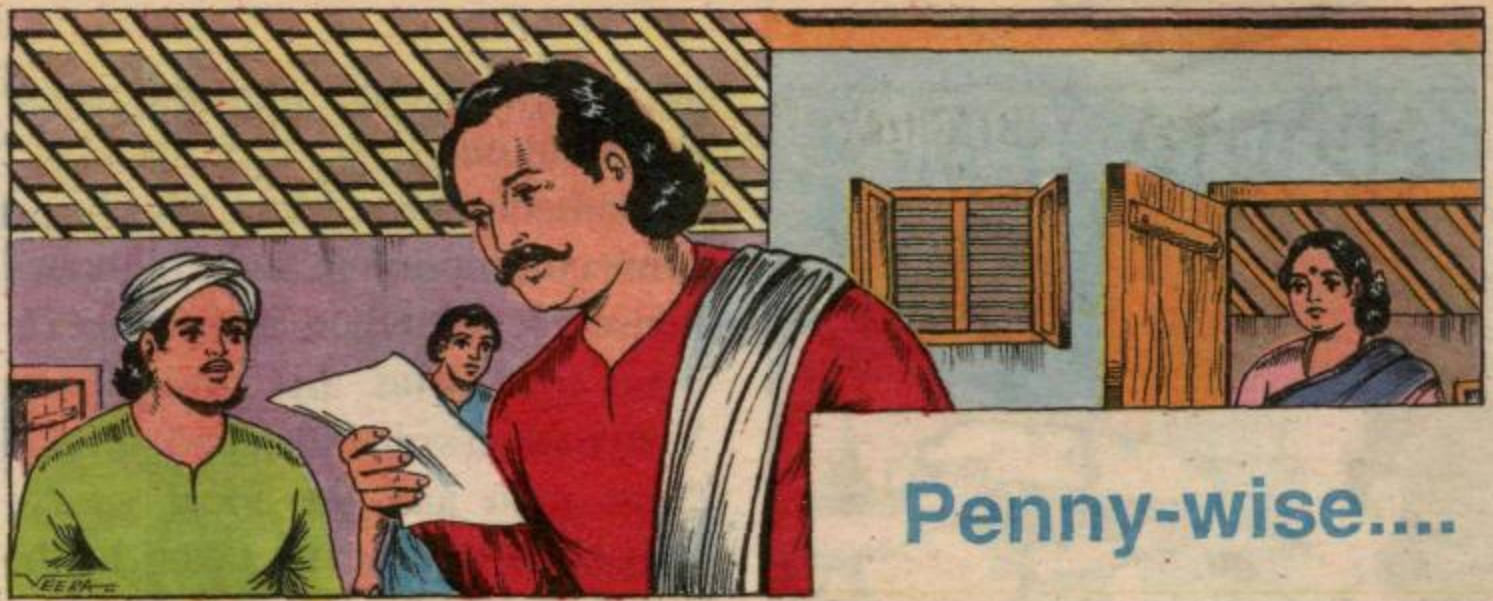
the permissible limit of 2 metres per second – one of the judges pointed out that some people were standing in front of the anemometer – wind measuring

instrument – and expressed a doubt whether Pedroso's leap could be ratified. When Gwen Torrence, of the U.S.A., clocked the fastest (10.83 seconds) in women's 100 metres at Sestriere, the wind was at a "howling" 5.10 metres per second. Her timing was not, therefore, accepted. Pedroso, who had been gifted with a sports car for his world best leap, was told that he could keep the car in view of his "outstanding result". However, his regret is : he doesn't know how to drive!

Sports Day

August 29 will henceforth be observed as national "Sports Day" in India in honour of the legendary hockey player Dhyan Chand, who was born on this day. This decision was taken when a statue of this 'wizard with the stick' was unveiled at the National Stadium in New Delhi on his birth anniversary.





Penny-wise....

Muralidhar was the zamindar of Mandapur. Once he was looking for a capable servant. He happened to mention this to his friend Bhupathi, one day. "I've two servants in my employ," he said. "Both of them are good. Honest, too. One of them is intelligent, but careless in work. He has put in long service, so I pay him a little more than what the other gets. That man is not so intelligent, but he is very quick and willing to do whatever work he is given. And he's happy with the salary I give."

"If the employer is intelligent, he can manage with a servant even if he is not clever," remarked Muralidhar. "Only thing is, he must be honest, and attend to his work. You may send that man to me."

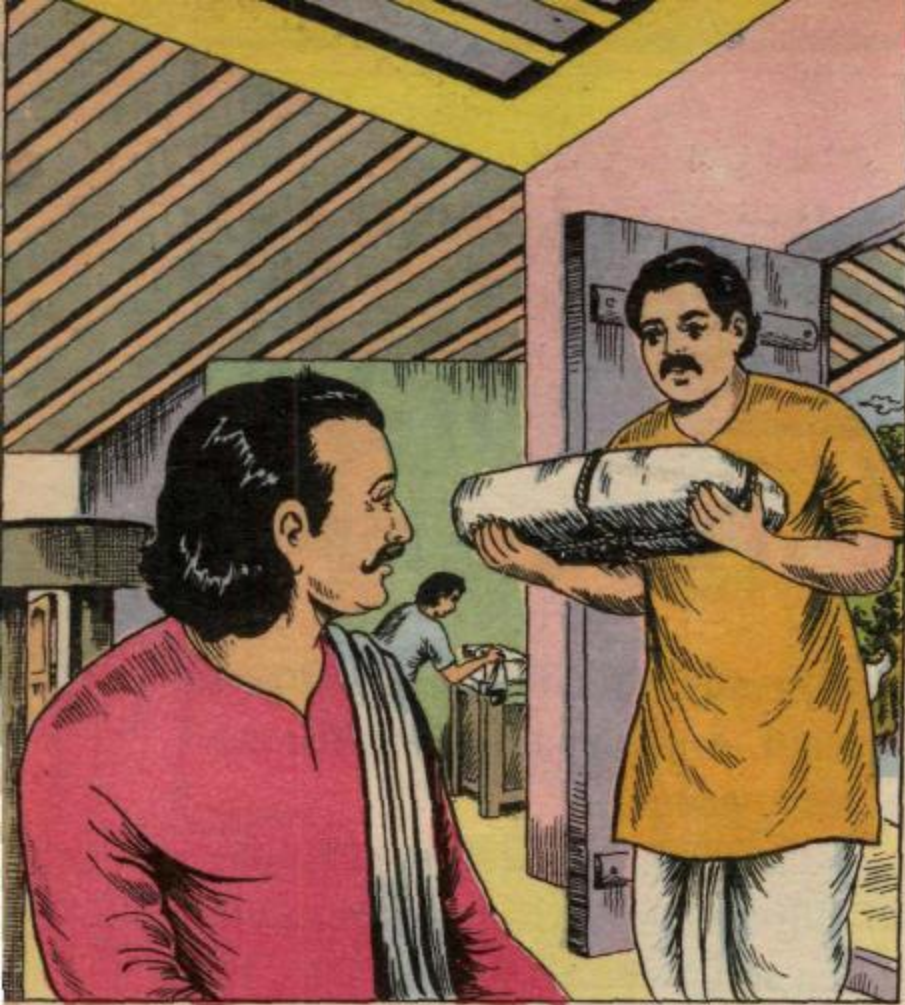
It was clear that he really wanted someone for a lower salary. That is why he argued about an intelligent

master not needing an intelligent servant. And he paid dearly for this attitude of his.

Bhupathi sent his servant Kumar to Muralidhar. He was straight away taken and given all sorts of jobs. He did them quick, though Muralidhar had to check his performance every now and then. At the end of one month, he was satisfied with Kumar, but paid him only what Bhupathi was giving him.

One day, Muralidhar received a letter from his married daughter living in the town, informing him of her young sister-in-law's betrothal. Her in-laws had asked for two saris, and she wanted them to be specially made in the village and sent to her within a week.

Muralidhar sent for the weaver known to him. He agreed to weave the saris as a special job and hand them within a week. The zamindar



sent back the messenger who had brought his daughter's letter, asking him to tell her that the saris would reach her in time for the ceremony.

The weaver completed the job in six days and went to the zamindar on the seventh day in the morning. It was raining at that time. "Please see that they are taken to the town carefully," said the weaver. "If they get wet, then the colour will wash away and fade."

After the weaver had gone away, Muralidhar called Kumar. "Take this parcel to the town and give it to my daughter. It contains saris. They should not get wet." He cautioned

his servant. Kumar took the parcel and went out.

Sometime later, Muralidhar heard some commotion in his neighbour's house. He went there to enquire. He was told that his neighbour Vijaymohan's old father had suffered chest pain and the local *vaidya* suggested that he be taken to the hospital in the town, as he would not be able to treat him. It so happened that the doctors in the town were known to Muralidhar, and so he offered to go with Vijaymohan and his father. He thought, while he was in the town, he would also visit his daughter. Before he started, he enquired whether Kumar had already left for the town. Yes, he had left sometime ago. Muralidhar did not expect to see the servant on the way, as he would be taking the short-cut to the town, whereas his vehicle would go by the main road.

Soon they reached the hospital where the doctors examined the old man and assured Muralidhar and Vijaymohan that there was no cause for anxiety, but at the same time they would advise him to stay in the hospital for a few days. Muralidhar helped Vijaymohan make all arrangements in the hospital for the stay of father and son, and then



made his way to his daughter's house.

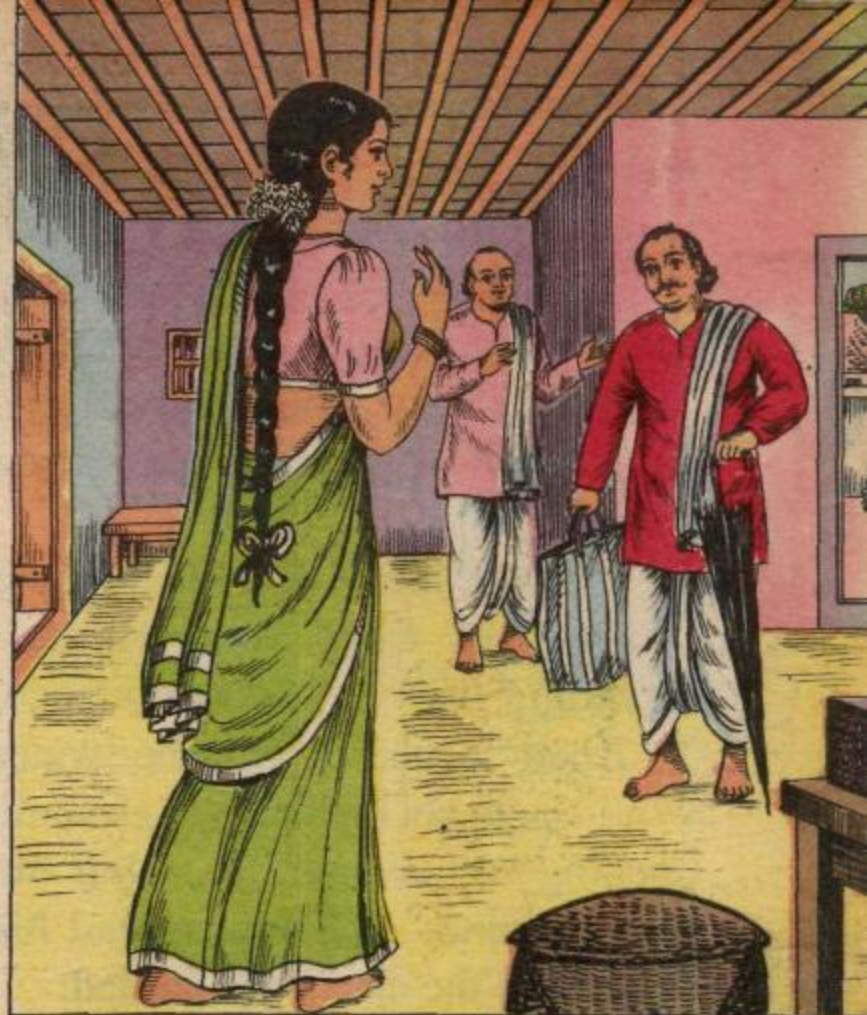
The girl was happy to see him. She thought her father himself had taken the trouble of carrying the saris to her. "Why did you venture out in this rain, father?" she said. "Couldn't you have sent a servant?"

Her father-in-law had by then joined them in the porch. He rebuked her. "Why do you find fault with him for coming here?" he asked her. "After all, he has come with a good purpose, hasn't he? Sir, please come in!"

Muralidhar followed them, and after taking a seat, he told them what had brought him to the town. "From what you told me, I guess that Kumar has not yet reached this place," he said, turning to his daughter. "He should be arriving any time now. Anyway, I shall stay for the ceremony and then only go back."

A little later Kumar arrived. He appeared completely drenched. "How did you get wet?" Muralidhar asked him angrily. "Couldn't you have taken shelter somewhere and then come out after the rain had stopped?"

"Didn't you ask me to come here post-haste?" Kumar protested. "That's why I hurried. I wanted to finish the work you gave me as fast as possible."



At that moment, Muralidhar was proud of himself. The man had proved his honesty and sense of responsibility in front of others. He praised him silently in his mind, and felt grateful to Bhupathi for having chosen a proper person.

"That's all right," said Muralidhar. "I hope you've kept the saris safe."

"After you had told me that specifically, do you think I would have allowed them to get wet? I've kept them safe; not a drop of water would fall on them."

Muralidhar felt comforted. "Good! But how did you manage to do that?"



"Oh! Even when I started, it was raining," explained Kumar. "So I kept the saris inside a box."

"Oh, you have?" remarked Muralidhar, heaving a sigh of relief. "That was very thoughtful of you, Kumar, but where's the box? Bring it here."

"Do you think I would allow the box to get wet?" said Kumar, spreading his chest in confidence. "If I had carried it with me, water would have got inside through some opening somewhere. So, I left the box at home." He now spread his fingers on the chest and smiled.

Everybody laughed, but Muralidhar felt ashamed of his servant. He sent back his horse-cart with Kumar and asked the driver to bring the box with the saris. His daughter and her in-laws were happy as the saris had reached them in time for the betrothal. Muralidhar himself returned

to the village only after attending the ceremony.

When he met Bhupathi next, Muralidhar told him all that had happened. "Kumar is honest, but he is a dunce. I think I can do with your other servant. Please send him to me if you can spare him. Even if he is careless or slow in his work, I think I'll be able to get things done. I also don't mind paying him a little more than what he gets now. I shall, however, retain Kumar, if you'll agree. Let him attend to smaller jobs. Maybe in course of time, he'll improve himself."

Bhupathi agreed to what Muralidhar said. Penny-wise pound foolish, say wise men. Muralidhar wished to spend little, and he paid for his folly. Ultimately, he had to appoint two servants instead of one and spend more money on their wages.





Peace of mind

Baliah was fed up with his family life. In fact, he often wondered why he should live at all. He could not find a solution to his problem. So, one day, he went away leaving his old parents and wife and children to fend for themselves. He wandered from place to place in search of some peace of mind. He came across a quiet village, skirted by the calm waters of a river and abounding in green fields. He thought he would lead a peaceful life there all by himself.

As he went about searching for a quiet corner, Baliah found an *ashram*. At Anandashram, a *sanyasi* called Sadanand was imparting education to children. Baliah prostrated before Sadanand. "Who're you, my son?" he asked. "What can I do for you?" The *sanyasi* guessed that something was troubling the man and he was agitated.

"Swami, please accept me as your disciple!" pleaded Baliah. "Let me stay here, looking after you and the ashram."

Sadanand took a good look at him. "I take as my disciples only *brahmacharis*. You don't look a *brahmachari*. Aren't you a family man?"

"Yes, swami, I'm not a *brahmachari*," confessed Baliah. "I do have a family, but I'm fed up with that life. My wife is a chatterbox, and she always picks a quarrel with my mother. So much so there's no peace at home. I was unable to tolerate such a situation any longer, and so I ran away. I really wish to become a *sanyasi*. That's why I came here to seek your help and blessings. Please accept me as your disciple."

"All right, you may stay here for some day," said Sadanand. "I shall take a decision by and by."

Baliah was very happy for the first few days. Soon, the charm of ashram life was waning for him. He found it difficult to abide by the regulations and restrictions of the ashram. He was unable to enjoy the simple food at the ashram. He decided that he was not cut for such a life of rigour.

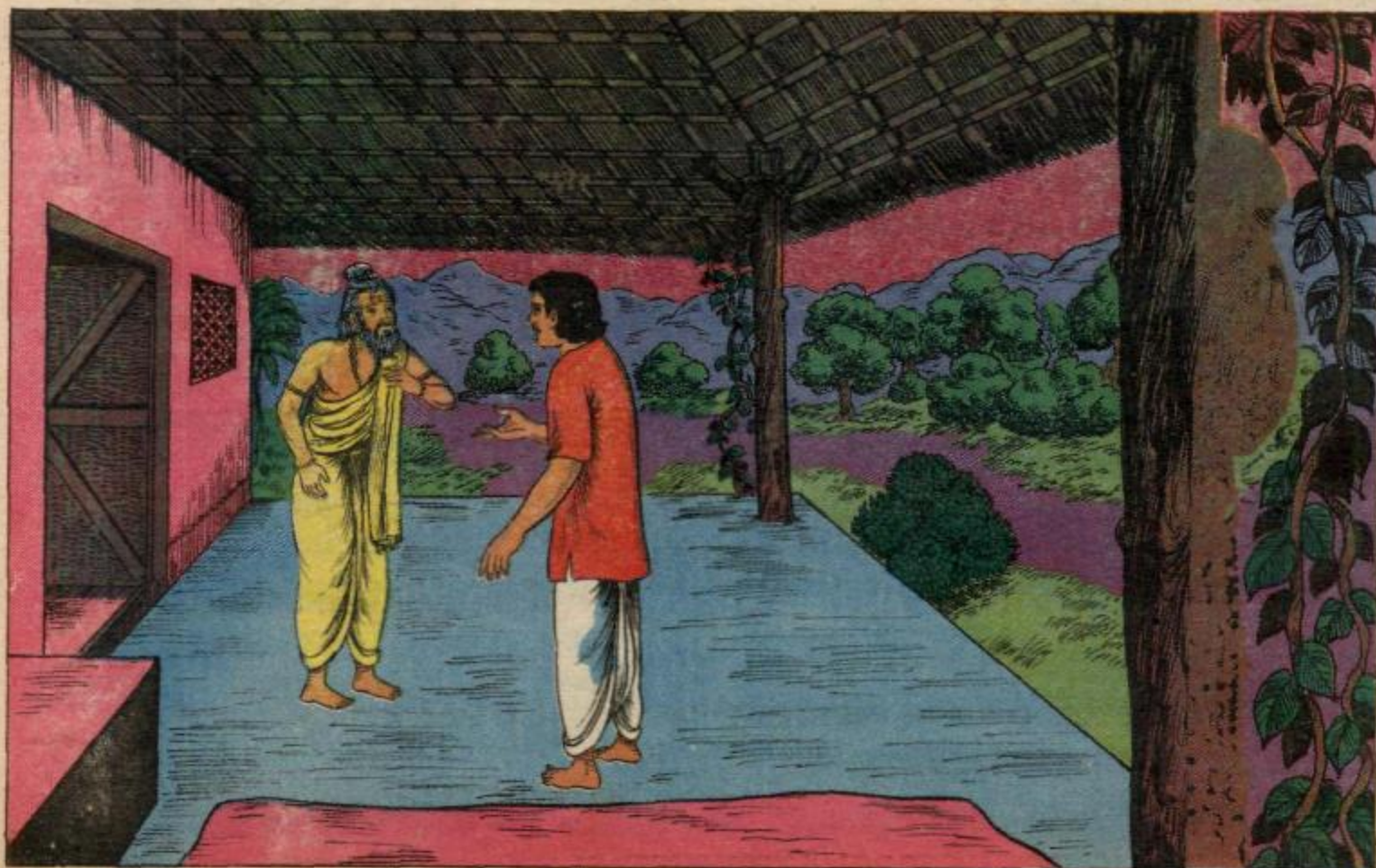
One night, Baliah was asleep when he was woken up by Sadanand. "Baliah, I can't find my rosary. I wanted to do *japa* and went to fetch the *mala*, but couldn't find it where I had kept it. I searched everywhere, but it is missing. Would you help me search for it?" The sanyasi led him outside the hut.

"Swami, don't you remember where you had kept the rosary before you went to bed?" queried Baliah, not very happy that he had been disturbed in his sleep.

"I remember to have kept it on the stool in my room," said Sadanand. "It's dark inside. So, I thought we would search for it outside where there's moonlight. It's full moon, you know."

Baliah tried to control his laughter. "Swami, please don't get angry with me, but why are you searching not where you had kept it but at all other places?"

Sadanand smiled. "What you said is right, Baliah. But, tell me, why are





you saying it? You're also searching elsewhere for peace of mind which you missed at home! Similarly, what I miss in my room, I am trying to search for it here, outside."

Baliah caught the point which the sanyasi wanted to make. He fell at his feet. "Swami! You've opened my eyes! I shall immediately go back home and try to solve the problem in my family and lead a peaceful life."

"Why should you leave at dead of night?" said Sadanand. "You can go tomorrow morning, taking your wife

along with you," he added, with a smile.

"Wife?" Baliah could not believe his ears. "You mean to say, my wife is here?"

"Yes, she came here looking for you," said Sadanand. "She has given me her word that she won't quarrel with her mother-in-law anymore. She requested me to send you back with her."

Baliah was very happy. The next morning, he and his wife sought the blessings of Sadanand and then left for their village.

You can teach a student a lesson for a day, but if you can teach him to learn by creating curiosity, he will continue the learning process as long he lives.

– Clay P. Bedford

All great discoveries are made by men whose feelings run ahead of their thinking.

– C.H. Parkhurst





LET US KNOW

What is the difference between 'climate' and 'weather'? – **Kumar Nityanand, Pune**

Climate is the condition of a country or place with regard to temperature, moisture, etc. We say, the countries in the northern hemisphere have a cold climate; or Kashmir has a cold climate, to mean that for most days of the year its climate is cold. Whereas, *weather* denotes the atmospheric condition during a specified period. Like, England which has a cold climate can have a rainy weather. One often hears people exclaim: "It's awful weather!" when there is a change from the usual climate.

What is the difference between 'duty' and 'tax'?

– **R.M. Shinde, Nipani**

That which is due (to the government) is 'duty', while 'tax' is the share that one has to pay to the government. Income tax is the share of income one pays to the government; similarly property tax; education levy; library cess, etc, where the percentage to be paid is stipulated from time to time. Customs *duty* is the amount one actually pays according to certain rates based on the intrinsic value of the items imported. The difference in meaning is subtle.

FROM OUR READERS

May I join the large number of readers who have liked and appreciated the 'Forts of India' series. However, an outline map of India showing the location of the forts that have been described would have added to its value. By the way what does 'pull-out' mean?

– **S.C. Shankar Rao, Bangalore**

Turn to page 36 for a map! Our next series "A Journey Along the Coast", starting in October, will also have a map at an appropriate stage. A 'pull-out' (like the poster of a film star or a sports person or a calendar), when actually pulled out, does not damage the other pages which are left intact in the magazine. Pull-out helps those readers who do not wish to preserve the whole issue. Our readers, for all we know, invariably keep the issues for years together! – Editor

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



MAHANTESH C. MORABAD



MAHANTESH C. MORABAD

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? You may write it on a post card and mail it to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by the 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs. 100/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

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PICKS FROM THE WISE

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- Joubart

Ready money is Alladdin's lamp.

- Byron

Votes should be weighed, not counted.

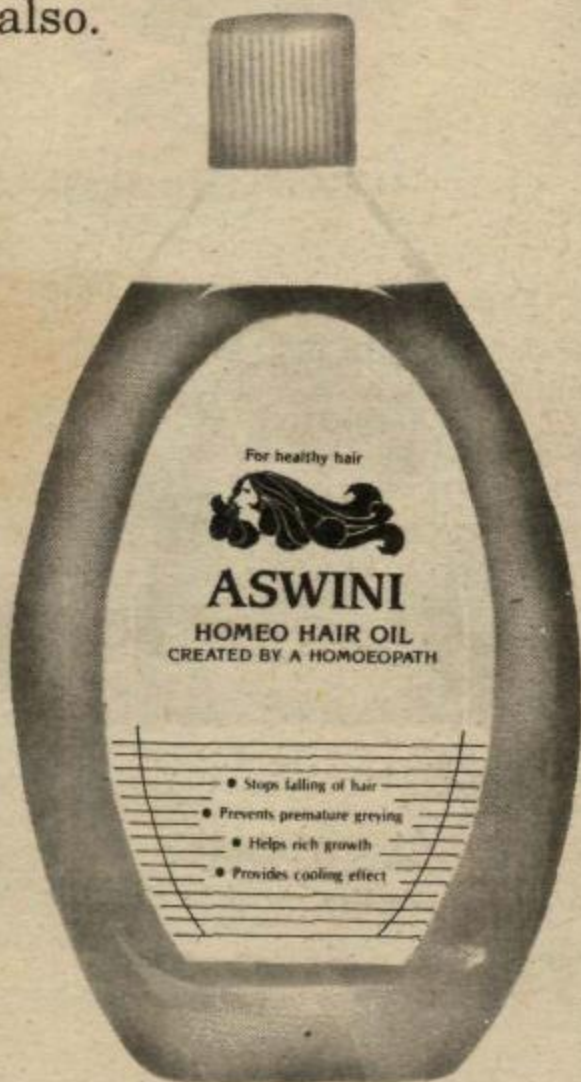
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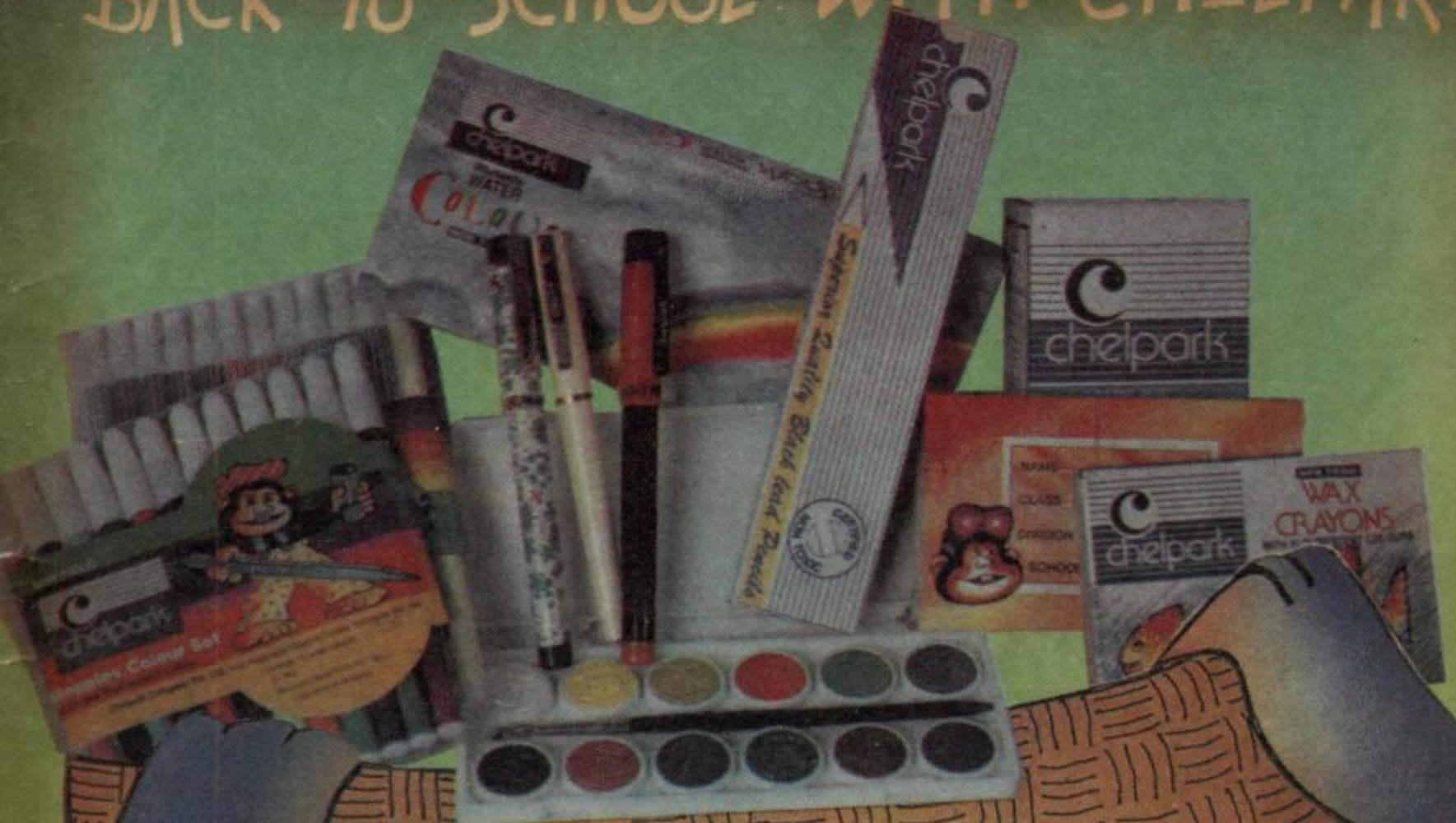
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